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LAVENGRO.

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LAVENGRO;

THE SCHOLAR—THE GYPSY—THE PRIEST.

BY GEORGE BORROW,

AUTHOR OF "THE BIBLE IN SPAIN," AND "THE GYPSIES OF SPAIN."

IN THREE VOLUMES.—VOL. III.

LONDON:
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1851.

By the same Author,

THE BIBLE IN SPAIN; or, The JOURNEYS, ADVENTURES, and IMPRISONMENTS of an ENGLISHMAN in an attempt to circulate the SCRIPTURES in the PENINSULA. *Fourth Edition.* 3 vols. post 8vo. 27*s.*

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LAVENGRO.

CHAPTER I.

ELASTIC STEP.—DISCONSOLATE PARTY.—NOT THE SEASON.—MEND YOUR DRAUGHT.—GOOD ALE.—CROTCHET.—HAMMER AND TONGS.—SCHOOLMASTER.—TRUE EDEN LIFE.—FLAMING TINMAN.—TWICE MY SIZE.—HARD AT WORK.—MY POOR WIFE.—GREY MOLL.—A BIBLE.—HALF AND HALF.—WHAT TO DO.—HALF INCLINED.—IN NO TIME.—ON ONE CONDITION.—DON'T STARE.—LIKE THE WIND.

After walking some time, I found myself on the great road, at the same spot where I had turned aside the day before with my new-made acquaintance, in the direction of his house. I now continued my journey as before, towards the north. The weather, though beautiful, was much cooler than it had been for some time past; I walked at a great rate, with a springing and elastic step. In about two hours I came to where a kind of cottage stood a little way back from the road, with a huge oak before it, under the shade of which stood a little pony and a cart, which seemed to contain various articles. I

was going past—when I saw scrawled over the door of the cottage, "Good beer sold here;" upon which, feeling myself all of a sudden very thirsty, I determined to go in and taste the beverage.

I entered a well-sanded kitchen, and seated myself on a bench, on one side of a long white table; the other side, which was nearest to the wall, was occupied by a party, or rather family, consisting of a grimy-looking man, somewhat under the middle size, dressed in faded velveteens, and wearing a leather apron—a rather pretty-looking woman, but sun-burnt, and meanly dressed, and two ragged children, a boy and girl, about four or five years old. The man sat with his eyes fixed upon the table, supporting his chin with both his hands; the woman, who was next him, sat quite still, save that occasionally she turned a glance upon her husband with eyes that appeared to have been lately crying. The children had none of the vivacity so general at their age. A more disconsolate family I had never seen; a mug, which, when filled, might contain half-a-pint, stood empty before them; a very disconsolate party indeed.

"House!" said I; "House!" and then as nobody

appeared, I cried again as loud as I could, "House! do you hear me, House!"

"What's your pleasure, young man?" said an elderly woman, who now made her appearance from a side apartment.

"To taste your ale," said I.

"How much?" said the woman, stretching out her hand towards the empty mug upon the table.

"The largest measure-full in your house," said I, putting back her hand gently. "This is not the season for half-pint mugs."

"As you will, young man," said the landlady; and presently brought in an earthen pitcher which might contain about three pints, and which foamed and frothed withal.

"Will this pay for it?" said I, putting down sixpence.

"I have to return you a penny," said the landlady, putting her hand into her pocket.

"I want no change," said I, flourishing my hand with an air.

"As you please, young gentleman," said the landlady, and then making a kind of curtsey, she again retired to the side apartment.

"Here is your health, sir," said I to the grimy-looking man, as I raised the pitcher to my lips.

The tinker, for such I supposed him to be, without altering his posture, raised his eyes, looked at me for a moment, gave a slight nod, and then once more fixed his eyes upon the table. I took a draught of the ale, which I found excellent; "won't you drink?" said I, holding the pitcher to the tinker.

The man again lifted up his eyes, looked at me, and then at the pitcher, and then at me again. I thought at one time that he was about to shake his head in sign of refusal, but no, he looked once more at the pitcher, and the temptation was too strong. Slowly removing his head from his arms, he took the pitcher, sighed, nodded, and drank a tolerable quantity, and then set the pitcher down before me upon the table.

"You had better mend your draught," said I to the tinker, "it is a sad heart that never rejoices."

"That's true," said the tinker, and again raising the pitcher to his lips, he mended his draught as I had bidden him, drinking a larger quantity than before.

"Pass it to your wife," said I.

The poor woman took the pitcher from the man's hand; before, however, raising it to her lips, she looked at the children. True mother's heart, thought I to myself, and taking the half-pint mug, I made her fill it, and then held it to the children, causing each to take a draught. The woman wiped her eyes with the corner of her gown, before she raised the pitcher and drank to my health.

In about five minutes none of the family looked half so disconsolate as before, and the tinker and I were in deep discourse.

Oh, genial and gladdening is the power of good ale, the true and proper drink of Englishmen. He is not deserving of the name of Englishman who speaketh against ale, that is good ale, like that which has just made merry the hearts of this poor family; and yet there are beings, calling themselves Englishmen, who say that it is a sin to drink a cup of ale, and who, on coming to this passage will be tempted to fling down the book and exclaim, "The man is evidently a bad man, for behold, by his own confession, he is not only fond of ale himself, but is in the habit of tempting other people with it." Alas! alas! what a number of silly individuals there are

in this world; I wonder what they would have had me do in this instance—given the afflicted family a cup of cold water? go to! They could have found water in the road, for there was a pellucid spring only a few yards distant from the house, as they were well aware—but they wanted not water; what should I have given them? meat and bread? go to! They were not hungry; there was stifled sobbing in their bosoms, and the first mouthful of strong meat would have choked them. What should I have given them? Money! what right had I to insult them by offering them money? Advice! words, words, words; friends, there is a time for everything; there is a time for a cup of cold water; there is a time for strong meat and bread; there is a time for advice, and there is a time for ale; and I have generally found that the time for advice is after a cup of ale. I do not say many cups; the tongue then speaketh more smoothly, and the ear listeneth more benignantly; but why do I attempt to reason with you? do I not know you for conceited creatures, with one idea—and that a foolish one;—a crotchet, for the sake of which ye would sacrifice anything, religion if required—

country? There, fling down my book, I do not wish ye to walk any farther in my company, unless you cast your nonsense away, which ye will never do for it is the breath of your nostrils; fling down my book, it was not written to support a crotchet, for know one thing, my good people, I have invariably been an enemy to humbug.

"Well," said the tinker, after we had discoursed some time, "I little thought, when I first saw you, that you were of my own trade."

Myself. — Nor am I, at least not exactly. There is not much difference, 'tis true, between a tinker and a smith.

Tinker.—You are a whitesmith then?

Myself.—Not I, I'd scorn to be anything so mean; no, friend, black's the colour; I am a brother of the horse-shoe. Success to the hammer and tongs.

Tinker.—Well, I shouldn't have thought you had been a blacksmith by your hands.

Myself.—I have seen them, however, as black as yours. The truth is, I have not worked for many a day.

Tinker.—Where did you serve first?

Myself.—In Ireland.

Tinker.—That's a good way off, isn't it?

Myself.—Not very far; over those mountains to the left, and the run of salt water that lies behind them, there's Ireland."

Tinker.—It's a fine thing to be a scholar.

Myself.—Not half so fine as to be a tinker.

Tinker.—How you talk!

Myself.—Nothing but the truth; what can be better than to be one's own master? Now a tinker is his own master, a scholar is not. Let us suppose the best of scholars, a schoolmaster for example, for I suppose you will admit that no one can be higher in scholarship than a schoolmaster; do you call his a pleasant life? I don't; we should call him a school-slave, rather than a schoolmaster. Only conceive him in blessed weather like this, in his close school, teaching children to write in copy-books, "Evil communication corrupts good manners," or "You cannot touch pitch without defilement," or to spell out of Abedariums, or to read out of Jack Smith, or Sandford and Merton. Only conceive him, I say, drudging in such guise from morning till night, without any rational enjoyment

but to beat the children. Would you compare such a dog's life as that with your own—the happiest under heaven—true Eden life, as the Germans would say,—pitching your tent under the pleasant hedge-rows, listening to the song of the feathered tribes, collecting all the leaky kettles in the neighbourhood, soldering and joining, earning your honest bread by the wholesome sweat of your brow —making ten holes—hey, what's this? what's the man crying for?

Suddenly the tinker had covered his face with his hands, and begun to sob and moan like a man in the deepest distress; the breast of his wife was heaved with emotion; even the children were agitated, the youngest began to roar.

Myself.—What's the matter with you; what are you all crying about?

Tinker (uncovering his face).—Lord, why to hear you talk; isn't that enough to make anybody cry—even the poor babes? Yes, you said right, 'tis life in the garden of Eden—the tinker's; I see so now that I 'm about to give it up.

Myself. — Give it up! you must not think of such a thing.

Tinker.—No, I can't bear to think of it, and yet I must; what 's to be done? How hard to be frightened to death, to be driven off the roads.

Myself.—Who has driven you off the roads?

Tinker.—Who! the Flaming Tinman.

Myself.—Who is he?

Tinker.—The biggest rogue in England, and the cruellest, or he wouldn't have served me as he has done—I 'll tell you all about it. I was born upon the roads, and so was my father before me, and my mother too; and I worked with them as long as they lived, as a dutiful child, for I have nothing to reproach myself with on their account; and when my father died I took up the business, and went his beat, and supported my mother for the little time she lived; and when she died I married this young woman, who was not born upon the roads, but was a small tradesman's daughter, at Gloster. She had a kindness for me, and, notwithstanding her friends were against the match, she married the poor tinker, and came to live with him upon the roads. Well, young man, for six or seven years I was the happiest fellow breathing, living just the life you described just now—respected by everybody

in this beat; when in an evil hour comes this Black Jack, this flaming tinman, into these parts, driven as they say out of Yorkshire—for no good you may be sure. Now there is no beat will support two tinkers, as you doubtless know; mine was a good one, but it would not support the flying tinker and myself, though if it would have supported twenty it would have been all the same to the flying villain, who 'll brook no one but himself; so he presently finds me out, and offers to fight me for the beat. Now, being bred upon the roads, I can fight a little, that is with anything like my match, but I was not going to fight him, who happens to be twice my size, and so I told him; whereupon he knocks me down, and would have done me farther mischief had not some men been nigh and prevented him; so he threatened to cut my throat, and went his way. Well, I did not like such usage at all, and was woundily frightened, and tried to keep as much out of his way as possible, going anywhere but where I thought I was likely to meet him; and sure enough for several months I contrived to keep out of his way. At last somebody told me that he was gone back to Yorkshire, where-

upon I was glad at heart, and ventured to show myself, going here and there as I did before. Well, young man, it was yesterday that I and mine set ourselves down in a lane, about five miles from here, and lighted our fire, and had our dinner, and after dinner I sat down to mend three kettles and a frying pan which the people in the neighbourhood had given me to mend—for, as I told you before, I have a good connection, owing to my honesty. Well, as I sat there hard at work, happy as the day's long, and thinking of anything but what was to happen, who should come up but this Black Jack, this king of the tinkers, rattling along in his cart, with his wife, that they call Grey Moll, by his side—for the villain has got a wife, and a maid-servant too; the last I never saw, but they that has, says that she is as big as a house, and young, and well to look at, which can't be all said of Moll, who, though she's big enough in all conscience, is neither young nor handsome. Well, no sooner does he see me and mine, than, giving the reins to Grey Moll, he springs out of his cart, and comes straight at me; not a word did he say, but on he comes straight at me like a wild bull. I am a quiet man,

young fellow, but I saw now that quietness would be of no use, so I sprang up upon my legs, and being bred upon the roads, and able to fight a little, I squared as he came running in upon me, and had a round or two with him. Lord bless you, young man, it was like a fly fighting with an elephant—one of those big beasts the show-folks carry about. I had not a chance with the fellow, he knocked me here, he knocked me there, knocked me into the hedge, and knocked me out again. I was at my last shifts, and my poor wife saw it. Now my poor wife, though she is as gentle as a pigeon, has yet a spirit of her own, and though she was 'nt bred upon the roads, can scratch a little; so when she saw me at my last shifts, she flew at the villain—she could'nt bear to see her partner murdered—and scratched the villain's face. Lord bless you, young man, she had better have been quiet: Grey Moll no sooner saw what she was about, than springing out of the cart, where she had sat all along perfectly quiet, save a little whooping and screeching to encourage her blade:—Grey Moll, I say (my flesh creeps when I think of it—for I am a kind husband, and love my poor wife) . . . .

Myself.—Take another draught of the ale; you look frightened, and it will do you good. Stout liquor makes stout heart, as the man says in the play.

Tinker.—That's true, young man; here's to you—where was I? Grey Moll no sooner saw what my wife was about, than springing out of the cart, she flew at my poor wife, clawed off her bonnet in a moment, and seized hold of her hair. Lord bless you, young man, my poor wife, in the hands of Grey Moll, was nothing better than a pigeon in the claws of a buzzard hawk, or I in the hands of the Flaming Tinman, which when I saw, my heart was fit to burst, and I determined to give up everything—everything to save my poor wife out of Grey Moll's claws. "Hold!" I shouted. "Hold, both of you—Jack, Moll. Hold, both of you, for God's sake, and I'll do what you will: give up trade, and business, connection, bread, and everything, never more travel the roads, and go down on my knees to you in the bargain." Well, this had some effect; Moll let go my wife, and the Blazing Tinman stopped for a moment; it was only for a moment, however, that he left off—all of a sudden he hit me a blow

which sent me against a tree; and what did the villain then? why the flying villain seized me by the throat, and almost throttled me, roaring—what do you think, young man, that the flaming villain roared out?

Myself.—I really don't know—something horrible, I suppose.

Tinker.—Horrible, indeed; you may well say horrible, young man; neither more nor less than the bible—"a bible, a bible!" roared the Blazing Tinman; and he pressed my throat so hard against the tree that my senses began to dwaul away—a bible, a bible, still ringing in my ears. Now, young man, my poor wife is a Christian woman, and, though she travels the roads, carries a bible with her at the bottom of her sack, with which sometimes she teaches the children to read—it was the only thing she brought with her from the place of her kith and kin, save her own body and the clothes on her back; so my poor wife, half distracted, runs to her sack, pulls out the bible, and puts it into the hand of the Blazing Tinman, who then thrusts the end of it into my mouth with such fury that it made my

lips bleed, and broke short one of my teeth which happened to be decayed. "Swear," said he, "swear, you mumping villain, take your bible oath that you will quit and give up the beat altogether, or I 'll"—and then the hard-hearted villain made me swear by the bible, and my own damnation, half-throttled as I was, to—to—I can't go on . . . .

Myself.—Take another draught—stout liquor . . .

Tinker.—I can't young man, my heart's too full, and what's more, the pitcher is empty.

Myself.—And so he swore you, I suppose, on the bible, to quit the roads?

Tinker.—You are right, he did so, the gypsy villain.

Myself.—Gypsy! Is he a gypsy?

Tinker.—Not exactly; what they call a half and half. His father was a gypsy, and his mother, like mine, one who walked the roads.

Myself. — Is he of the Smiths — the Petulengres?

Tinker.—I say, young man, you know a thing or two; one would think, to hear you talk, you had been bred upon the roads. I thought none but

those bred upon the roads knew anything of that name—Petulengres! No, not he, he fights the Petulengres whenever he meets them; he likes nobody but himself, and wants to be king of the roads. I believe he is a Boss, or a . . . . at any rate he 's a bad one, as I know to my cost.

Myself.—And what are you going to do?

Tinker.—Do! you may well ask that; I don't know what to do. My poor wife and I have been talking of that all the morning, over that half-pint mug of beer; we can't determine on what 's to be done. All we know is, that we must quit the roads. The villain swore that the next time he saw us on the roads he 'd cut all our throats, and seize our horse and bit of a cart that are now standing out there under the tree.

Myself.—And what do you mean to do with your horse and cart?

Tinker.—Another question! What shall we do with our cart and pony? they are of no use to us now. Stay on the roads I will not, both for my oath's sake and my own. If we had a trifle of money, we were thinking of going to Bristol, where I might get up a little business, but we have none;

our last three farthings we spent about the mug of beer.

Myself.—But why don't you sell your horse and cart?

Tinker.—Sell them, and who would buy them, unless some one who wished to set up in my line; but there's no beat, and what's the use of the horse and cart and the few tools without the beat?

Myself.—I 'm half inclined to buy your cart and pony, and your beat too.

Tinker.—You! How came you to think of such a thing?

Myself.—Why, like yourself, I hardly know what to do. I want a home and work. As for a home, I suppose I can contrive to make a home out of your tent and cart; and as for work, I must learn to be a tinker, it would not be hard for one of my trade to learn to tinker; what better can I do? Would you have me go to Chester and work there now? I don't like the thoughts of it. If I go to Chester and work there, I can't be my own man; I must work under a master, and perhaps he and I should quarrel, and when I quarrel I am apt to hit folks, and those that hit folks are sometimes sent to

prison; I don't like the thought either of going to Chester or to Chester prison. What do you think I could earn at Chester?

Tinker.—A matter of eleven shillings a week, if any body would employ you, which I don't think they would with those hands of yours. But whether they would or not, if you are of a quarrelsome nature, you must not go to Chester; you would be in the castle in no time. I don't know how to advise you. As for selling you my stock, I'd see you farther first, for your own sake.

Myself.—Why?

Tinker.—Why! you would get your head knocked off. Suppose you were to meet him?

Myself.—Pooh, don't be afraid on my account; if I were to meet him I could easily manage him one way or other. I know all kinds of strange words and names, and, as I told you before, I sometimes hit people when they put me out.

Here the tinker's wife, who for some minutes past had been listening attentively to our discourse, interposed, saying, in a low soft tone: "I really don't see, John, why you should'nt sell the young man the things, seeing that he wishes for them, and is so con-

fident; you have told him plainly how matters stand, and if anything ill should befall him, people couldn't lay the blame on you; but I don't think any ill will befall him, and who knows but God has sent him to our assistance in time of need."

"I 'll hear of no such thing," said the tinker; "I have drunk at the young man's expense, and though he says he 's quarrelsome, I would not wish to sit in pleasanter company. A pretty fellow I should be, now, if I were to let him follow his own will. If he once sets up on my beat, he 's a lost man, his ribs will be stove in, and his head knocked off his shoulders. There, you are crying, but you shan't have your will though; I won't be the young man's destruction . . . . If, indeed, I thought he could manage the tinker—but he never can; he says he can hit, but it 's no use hitting the tinker;—crying still! you are enough to drive one mad. I say, young man, I believe you understand a thing or two, just now you were talking of knowing hard words and names—I don't wish to send you to your mischief—you say you know hard words and names; let us see. Only on one condition I 'll sell you the pony and things; as for the beat it 's gone, isn't mine

—sworn away by my own mouth. Tell me what 's my name; if you can't, may I . . . ."

Myself.—Don't swear, it 's a bad habit, neither pleasant nor profitable. Your name is Slingsby—Jack Slingsby. There, don't stare, there 's nothing in my telling you your name: I 've been in these parts before, at least not very far from here. Ten years ago, when I was little more than a child, I was about twenty miles from here in a post chaise, at the door of an inn, and as I looked from the window of the chaise, I saw you standing by a gutter, with a big tin ladle in your hand, and somebody called you Jack Slingsby. I never forget anything I hear or see; I can't, I wish I could. So there 's nothing strange in my knowing your name; indeed, there 's nothing strange in anything, provided you examine it to the bottom. Now what am I to give you for the things?

I paid Slingsby five pounds ten shillings for his stock in trade, cart, and pony—purchased sundry provisions of the landlady, also a wagoner's frock, which had belonged to a certain son of hers, deceased, gave my little animal a feed of corn, and prepared to depart.

"God bless you, young man," said Slingsby, shaking me by the hand, "you are the best friend I've had for many a day: I have but one thing to tell you, "Don't cross that fellow's path if you can help it; and stay—should the pony refuse to go, just touch him so, and he'll fly like the wind."

CHAPTER II.

EFFECTS OF CORN.—ONE NIGHT LONGER.—THE HOOFS.—A STUMBLE.—ARE YOU HURT?—WHAT A DIFFERENCE.—DROWSY.—MAZE OF BUSHES.—HOUSEKEEPING.—STICKS AND FURZE.—THE DRIFTWAY.—ACCOUNT OF STOCK.—ANVIL AND BELLOWS.—TWENTY YEARS.

It was two or three hours past noon when I took my departure from the place of the last adventure, walking by the side of my little cart; the pony, invigorated by the corn, to which he was probably not much accustomed, proceeded right gallantly; so far from having to hasten him forward by the particular application which the tinker had pointed out to me, I had rather to repress his eagerness, being, though an excellent pedestrian, not unfrequently left behind. The country through which I passed was beautiful and interesting, but solitary: few habitations appeared. As it was quite a matter of indifference to me in what direction I went, the whole world being before me, I allowed the pony to decide upon the matter; it was not long before he left the

high road, being probably no friend to public places. I followed him I knew not whither, but, from subsequent observation, have reason to suppose that our course was in a north-west direction. At length night came upon us, and a cold wind sprang up, which was succeeded by a drizzling rain.

I had originally intended to pass the night in the cart, or to pitch my little tent on some convenient spot by the road's side; but, owing to the alteration in the weather, I thought that it would be advisable to take up my quarters in any hedge alehouse at which I might arrive. To tell the truth, I was not very sorry to have an excuse to pass the night once more beneath a roof. I had determined to live quite independent, but I had never before passed a night by myself abroad, and felt a little apprehensive at the idea; I hoped, however, on the morrow, to be a little more prepared for the step, so I determined for one night—only for one night longer—to sleep like a Christian; but human determinations are not always put into effect, such a thing as opportunity is frequently wanting, such was the case here. I went on for a considerable time, in expectation of coming to some rustic hostelry, but

nothing of the kind presented itself to my eyes; the country in which I now was seemed almost uninhabited, not a house of any kind was to be seen—at least I saw none—though it is true houses might be near without my seeing them, owing to the darkness of the night, for neither moon nor star was abroad. I heard, occasionally, the bark of dogs; but the sound appeared to come from an immense distance. The rain still fell, and the ground beneath my feet was wet and miry; in short, it was a night in which even a tramper by profession would feel more comfortable in being housed than abroad. I followed in the rear of the cart, the pony still proceeding at a sturdy pace, till methought I heard other hoofs than those of my own nag; I listened for a moment, and distinctly heard the sound of hoofs approaching at a great rate, and evidently from the quarter towards which I and my little caravan were moving. We were in a dark lane—so dark that it was impossible for me to see my own hand. Apprehensive that some accident might occur, I ran forward, and, seizing the pony by the bridle, drew him as near as I could to the hedge. On came the hoofs—trot, trot, trot; and

evidently more than those of one horse; their speed as they advanced appeared to slacken—it was only, however, for a moment. I heard a voice cry, "Push on,—this is a desperate robbing place,—never mind the dark;" and the hoofs came on quicker than before. "Stop!" said I, at the top of my voice; "stop! or . . . . ." Before I could finish what I was about to say there was a stumble, a heavy fall, a cry, and a groan, and putting out my foot I felt what I conjectured to be the head of a horse stretched upon the road. "Lord have mercy upon us! what's the matter?" exclaimed a voice. "Spare my life," cried another voice, apparently from the ground; "only spare my life, and take all I have." "Where are you, Master Wise?" cried the other voice. "Help! here, Master Bat," cried the voice from the ground, "help me up or I shall be murdered." "Why, what's the matter?" said Bat. "Some one has knocked me down, and is robbing me," said the voice from the ground. "Help! murder!" cried Bat; and, regardless of the entreaties of the man on the ground that he would stay and help him up, he urged his horse forward and galloped away as

fast as he could. I remained for some time quiet, listening to various groans and exclamations uttered by the person on the ground; at length I said, "Holloa! are you hurt?" "Spare my life, and take all I have!" said the voice from the ground. "Have they not done robbing you yet?" said I; "when they have finished let me know, and I will come and help you." "Who is that?" said the voice; "pray come and help me, and do me no mischief." "You were saying that some one was robbing you," said I; "don't think I shall come till he is gone away." "Then you ben't he?" said the voice. "Ar'n't you robbed?" said I. "Can't say I be," said the voice; "not yet at any rate; but who are you? I don't know you." "A traveller whom you and your partner were going to run over in this dark lane; you almost frightened me out of my senses." "Frightened!" said the voice, in a louder tone; "frightened! oh!" and thereupon I heard somebody getting upon his legs. This accomplished, the individual proceeded to attend to his horse, and with a little difficulty raised him upon his legs also. "Ar'n't you hurt?" said I. "Hurt!" said the voice; "not I; don't think it, whatever

the horse may be. I tell you what, my fellow, I thought you were a robber, and now I find you are not; I have a good mind . . . ." "To do what?" "To serve you out; ar'n't you ashamed . . . . ?" "At what?" said I; "not to have robbed you? Shall I set about it now?" "Ha, ha!" said the man, dropping the bullying tone which he had assumed; "you are joking—robbing! who talks of robbing? I wonder how my horse's knees are; not much hurt, I think—only mired." The man, whoever he was, then got upon his horse; and, after moving him about a little, said, "Good night, friend; where are you?" "Here I am," said I, "just behind you." "You are, are you? Take that." I know not what he did, but probably pricking his horse with the spur the animal kicked out violently; one of his heels struck me on the shoulder, but luckily missed my face; I fell back with the violence of the blow, whilst the fellow scampered off at a great rate. Stopping at some distance, he loaded me with abuse, and then, continuing his way at a rapid trot, I heard no more of him.

"What a difference!" said I, getting up; "last

night I was fêted in the hall of a rich genius, and to-night I am knocked down and mired in a dark lane by the heel of Master Wise's horse—I wonder who gave him that name? And yet he was wise enough to wreak his revenge upon me, and I was not wise enough to keep out of his way. Well, I am not much hurt, so it is of little consequence."

I now bethought me that, as I had a carriage of my own, I might as well make use of it; I therefore got into the cart, and, taking the reins in my hand, gave an encouraging cry to the pony, whereupon the sturdy little animal started again at as brisk a pace as if he had not already come many a long mile. I lay half reclining in the cart, holding the reins lazily, and allowing the animal to go just where he pleased, often wondering where he would conduct me. At length I felt drowsy, and my head sank upon my breast; I soon aroused myself, but it was only to doze again; this occurred several times. Opening my eyes after a doze somewhat longer than the others, I found that the drizzling rain had ceased, a corner of the moon was apparent in the heavens, casting a faint light; I looked around for a moment or two, but my eyes and brain

were heavy with slumber, and I could scarcely distinguish where we were. I had a kind of dim consciousness that we were traversing an uninclosed country—perhaps a heath; I thought, however, that I saw certain large black objects looming in the distance, which I had a confused idea might be woods or plantations; the pony still moved at his usual pace. I did not find the jolting of the cart at all disagreeable, on the contrary, it had quite a somniferous effect upon me. Again my eyes closed; I opened them once more, but with less perception in them than before, looked forward, and, muttering something about woodlands, I placed myself in an easier posture than I had hitherto done, and fairly fell asleep.

How long I continued in that state I am unable to say, but I believe for a considerable time; I was suddenly awakened by the ceasing of the jolting to which I had become accustomed, and of which I was perfectly sensible in my sleep. I started up and looked around me, the moon was still shining, and the face of the heaven was studded with stars; I found myself amidst a maze of bushes of various kinds, but principally hazel and holly, through

which was a path or driftway with grass growing on either side, upon which the pony was already diligently browsing. I conjectured that this place had been one of the haunts of his former master, and, on dismounting and looking about, was strengthened in that opinion by finding a spot under an ash tree which, from its burnt and blackened appearance, seemed to have been frequently used as a fire-place. I will take up my quarters here, thought I; it is an excellent spot for me to commence my new profession in; I was quite right to trust myself to the guidance of the pony. Unharnessing the animal without delay, I permitted him to browse at free will on the grass, convinced that he would not wander far from a place to which he was so much attached; I then pitched the little tent close beside the ash tree to which I have alluded, and conveyed two or three articles into it, and instantly felt that I had commenced housekeeping for the first time in my life. Housekeeping, however, without a fire is a very sorry affair, something like the housekeeping of children in their toy houses; of this I was the more sensible from feeling very cold and shivering, owing to my late exposure to the rain, and sleeping

in the night air. Collecting, therefore, all the dry sticks and furze I could find, I placed them upon the fire-place, adding certain chips and a billet which I found in the cart, it having apparently been the habit of Slingsby to carry with him a small store of fuel. Having then struck a spark in a tinder-box and lighted a match, I set fire to the combustible heap, and was not slow in raising a cheerful blaze; I then drew my cart near the fire, and, seating myself on one of the shafts, hung over the warmth with feelings of intense pleasure and satisfaction. Having continued in this posture for a considerable time, I turned my eyes to the heaven in the direction of a particular star; I, however, could not find the star, nor indeed many of the starry train, the greater number having fled, from which circumstance, and from the appearance of the sky, I concluded that morning was nigh. About this time I again began to feel drowsy; I therefore arose, and having prepared for myself a kind of couch in the tent, I flung myself upon it and went to sleep.

I will not say that I was awakened in the morning by the carolling of birds, as I perhaps might if

I were writing a novel; I awoke because, to use vulgar language, I had slept my sleep out, not because the birds were carolling around me in numbers, as they had probably been for hours without my hearing them. I got up and left my tent; the morning was yet more bright than that of the preceding day. Impelled by curiosity, I walked about endeavouring to ascertain to what place chance, or rather the pony, had brought me; following the driftway for some time, amidst bushes and stunted trees, I came to a grove of dark pines, through which it appeared to lead; I tracked it a few hundred yards, but seeing nothing but trees, and the way being wet and sloughy, owing to the recent rain, I returned on my steps, and, pursuing the path in another direction, came to a sandy road leading over a common, doubtless the one I had traversed the preceding night. My curiosity satisfied, I returned to my little encampment, and on the way beheld a small footpath on the left winding through the bushes, which had before escaped my observation. Having reached my tent and cart, I breakfasted on some of the provisions which I had procured the day before, and then proceeded to

take a regular account of the stock formerly possessed by Slingsby the tinker, but now become my own by right of lawful purchase.

Besides the pony, the cart, and the tent, I found I was possessed of a matress stuffed with straw on which to lie, and a blanket to cover me, the last quite clean and nearly new; then there was a frying pan and a kettle, the first for cooking any food which required cooking, and the second for heating any water which I might wish to heat. I likewise found an earthen teapot and two or three cups; of the first I should rather say I found the remains, it being broken in three parts, no doubt since it came into my possession, which would have precluded the possibility of my asking anybody to tea for the present, should anybody visit me, even supposing I had tea and sugar, which was not the case. I then overhauled what might more strictly be called the stock in trade; this consisted of various tools, an iron ladle, a chafing pan and small bellows, sundry pans and kettles, the latter being of tin, with the exception of one which was of copper, all in a state of considerable dilapidation—if I may use the term; of these first Slingsby had spoken in particular,

advising me to mend them as soon as possible, and to endeavour to sell them, in order that I might have the satisfaction of receiving some return upon the outlay which I had made. There was likewise a small quantity of block tin, sheet tin, and solder. "This Slingsby," said I, "is certainly a very honest man, he has sold me more than my money's worth; I believe, however, there is something more in the cart." Thereupon I rummaged the farther end of the cart, and, amidst a quantity of straw, I found a small anvil and bellows of that kind which are used in forges, and two hammers such as smiths use, one great, and the other small.

The sight of these last articles caused me no little surprise, as no word which had escaped from the mouth of Slingsby had given me reason to suppose that he had ever followed the occupation of a smith; yet, if he had not, how did he come by them? I sat down upon the shaft, and pondered the question deliberately in my mind; at length I concluded that he had come by them by one of those numerous casualties which occur upon the roads, of which I, being a young hand upon the roads, must have a very imperfect conception; honestly, of course—for I

scouted the idea that Slingsby would have stolen this blacksmith's gear—for I had the highest opinion of his honesty, which opinion I still retain at the present day, which is upwards of twenty years from the time of which I am speaking, during the whole of which period I have neither seen the poor fellow, nor received any intelligence of him.

CHAPTER III.

NEW PROFESSION.—BEAUTIFUL NIGHT.—JUPITER.—SHARP AND SHRILL.—THE ROMMANY CHI.—ALL ALONE.—THREE AND SIXPENCE.—WHAT IS ROMMANY?—BE CIVIL.—PARRACO TUTE.—SLIGHT START.—SHE WILL BE GRATEFUL.—THE RUSTLING.

I PASSED the greater part of the day in endeavouring to teach myself the mysteries of my new profession. I cannot say that I was very successful, but the time passed agreeably, and was therefore not ill spent. Towards evening I flung my work aside, took some refreshment, and afterwards a walk.

This time I turned up the small footpath, of which I have already spoken. It led in a zigzag manner through thickets of hazel, elder, and sweet briar; after following its windings for somewhat better than a furlong, I heard a gentle sound of water, and presently came to a small rill, which ran directly across the path. I was rejoiced at the sight, for I had already experienced the want of

water, which I yet knew must be nigh at hand, as I was in a place to all appearance occasionally frequented by wandering people, who I was aware never take up their quarters in places where water is difficult to be obtained. Forthwith I stretched myself on the ground, and took a long and delicious draught of the crystal stream, and then, seating myself in a bush, I continued for some time gazing on the water as it purled tinkling away in its channel through an opening in the hazels, and should have probably continued much longer had not the thought that I had left my property unprotected compelled me to rise and return to my encampment.

Night came on, and a beautiful night it was; up rose the moon, and innumerable stars decked the firmament of heaven. I sat on the shaft, my eyes turned upwards. I had found it: there it was twinkling millions of miles above me, mightiest star of the system to which we belong: of all stars, the one which has most interest for me—the star Jupiter.

Why have I always taken an interest in thee, O Jupiter? I know nothing about thee, save what every child knows, that thou art a big star, whose

only light is derived from moons. And is not that knowledge enough to make me feel an interest in thee? Ay, truly, I never look at thee without wondering what is going on in thee; what is life in Jupiter? That there is life in Jupiter who can doubt? There is life in our own little star, therefore there must be life in Jupiter, which is not a little star. But how different must life be in Jupiter from what it is in our own little star! Life here is life beneath the dear sun—life in Jupiter is life beneath moons—four moons—no single moon is able to illumine that vast bulk. All know what life is in our own little star; it is anything but a routine of happiness here, where the dear sun rises to us every day: then how sad and moping must life be in mighty Jupiter, on which no sun ever shines, and which is never lighted save by pale moon-beams! The thought that there is more sadness and melancholy in Jupiter than in this world of ours, where, alas! there is but too much, has always made me take a melancholy interest in that huge distant star.

Two or three days passed by in much the same manner as the first. During the morning I worked

upon my kettles, and employed the remaining part of the day as I best could. The whole of this time I only saw two individuals, rustics, who passed by my encampment without vouchsafing me a glance; they probably considered themselves my superiors, as perhaps they were.

One very brilliant morning, as I sat at work in very good spirits, for by this time I had actually mended in a very creditable way, as I imagined, two kettles and a frying pan, I heard a voice which seemed to proceed from the path leading to the rivulet; at first it sounded from a considerable distance, but drew nearer by degrees. I soon remarked that the tones were exceedingly sharp and shrill, with yet something of childhood in them. Once or twice I distinguished certain words in the song which the voice was singing; the words were—but no, I thought again I was probably mistaken—and then the voice ceased for a time; presently I heard it again, close to the entrance of the footpath; in another moment I heard it in the lane or glade in which stood my tent, where it abruptly stopped, but not before I had heard the very words which I at first thought I had distinguished.

I turned my head; at the entrance of the foot-path, which might be about thirty yards from the place where I was sitting, I perceived the figure of a young girl; her face was turned towards me, and she appeared to be scanning me and my encampment; after a little time she looked in the other direction, only for a moment, however; probably observing nothing in that quarter, she again looked towards me, and almost immediately stepped forward; and, as she advanced, sang the song which I had heard in the wood, the first words of which were those which I have already alluded to.

"The Rommany chi
And the Rommany chal,
Shall jaw tasaulor
To drab the bawlor,
And dook the gry
Of the farming rye."

A very pretty song, thought I, falling again hard to work upon my kettle; a very pretty song, which bodes the farmers much good. Let them look to their cattle.

"All alone here, brother?" said a voice close by me, in sharp but not disagreeable tones.

I made no answer, but continued my work, click,

click, with the gravity which became one of my profession. I allowed at least half a minute to elapse before I even lifted up my eyes.

A girl of about thirteen was standing before me; her features were very pretty, but with a peculiar expression; her complexion was a clear olive, and her jet black hair hung back upon her shoulders. She was rather scantily dressed, and her arms and feet were bare; round her neck, however, was a handsome string of corals, with ornaments of gold; in her hand she held a bulrush.

"All alone here, brother?" said the girl, as I looked up; "all alone here, in the lane; where are your wife and children?"

"Why do you call me brother?" said I; "I am no brother of yours. Do you take me for one of your people? I am no gypsy; not I, indeed!"

"Don't be afraid, brother, you are no Roman—Roman indeed, you are not handsome enough to be a Roman; not black enough, tinker though you be. If I called you brother, it was because I didn't know what else to call you. Marry, come up, brother, I should be sorry to have you for a brother."

"Then you don't like me?"

"Neither like you, nor dislike you, brother; what will you have for that kekaubi?"

"What's the use of talking to me in that un-Christian way; what do you mean, young gentlewoman?"

"Lord, brother, what a fool you are; every tinker knows what a kekaubi is. I was asking you what you would have for that kettle."

"Three-and-sixpence, young gentlewoman; isn't it well mended?"

"Well mended! I could have done it better myself; three-and-sixpence! it's only fit to be played at football with."

"I will take no less for it, young gentlewoman; it has caused me a world of trouble."

"I never saw a worse mended kettle. I say, brother, your hair is white."

"'Tis nature; your hair is black; nature, nothing but nature."

"I am young, brother; my hair is black—that's nature: you are young, brother; your hair is white—that's not nature."

"I can't help it if it be not, but it is nature after all; did you never see grey hair on the young?"

"Never! I have heard it is true of a grey lad, and a bad one he was. Oh, so bad."

"Sit down on the grass, and tell me all about it, sister; do to oblige me, pretty sister."

"Hey, brother, you don't speak as you did—you don't speak like a gorgio, you speak like one of us, you call me sister."

"As you call me brother; I am not an uncivil person after all, sister."

"I say, brother, tell me one thing, and look me in the face—there—do you speak Rommany?"

"Rommany! Rommany! what is Rommany?"

"What is Rommany? our language to be sure; tell me, brother, only one thing, you don't speak Rommany?"

"You say it."

"I don't say it, I wish to know. Do you speak Rommany?"

"Do you mean thieves' slang—cant? no, I don't speak cant, I don't like it, I only know a few words; they call a sixpence a tanner, don't they?"

"I don't know," said the girl, sitting down on the ground, "I was almost thinking—well, never mind, you don't know Rommany. I say, brother, I think I should like to have the kekaubi."

"I thought you said it was badly mended?"

"Yes, yes, brother, but . . . ."

"I thought you said it was only fit to be played at football with?"

"Yes, yes, brother, but . . . ."

"What will you give for it?"

"Brother, I am the poor person's child, I will give you sixpence for the kekaubi."

"Poor person's child; how came you by that necklace?"

"Be civil, brother; am I to have the kekaubi?"

"Not for sixpence; isn't the kettle nicely mended?"

"I never saw a nicer mended kettle, brother; am I to have the kekaubi, brother?"

"You like me then?"

"I don't dislike you—I dislike no one; there's only one, and him I don't dislike, him I hate."

"Who is he?"

"I scarcely know, I never saw him, but 'tis no

affair of yours, you don't speak Rommany; you will let me have the kekaubi, pretty brother?"

"You may have it, but not for sixpence, I'll give it to you."

"Parraco tute, that is, I thank you, brother; the rikkeni kekaubi is now mine. O, rare! I thank you kindly, brother."

Starting up, she flung the bulrush aside which she had hitherto held in her hand, and, seizing the kettle, she looked at it for a moment, and then began a kind of dance, flourishing the kettle over her head the while, and singing—

"The Rommany chi
And the Rommany chal,
Shall jaw tasaulor
To drab the bawlor,
And dook the gry
Of the farming rye."

"Good by, brother, I must be going."

"Good by, sister; why do you sing that wicked song?"

"Wicked song, hey, brother! you don't understand the song!"

"Ha, ha! gypsy daughter," said I, starting up and clapping my hands, "I don't understand Rom-

many, don't I? You shall see; here 's the answer to your gillie—

'The Rommany chi
And the Rommany chal,
Love Luripen
And dukkeripen,
And hokkeripen,
And every pen
But Lachipen
And tatchipen.'"

The girl, who had given a slight start when I began, remained for some time after I had concluded the song, standing motionless as a statue, with the kettle in her hand. At length she came towards me, and stared me full in the face. "Grey, tall, and talks Rommany," said she to herself. In her countenance there was an expression which I had not seen before—an expression which struck me as being composed of fear, curiosity, and the deepest hate. It was momentary, however, and was succeeded by one smiling, frank, and open. "Ha, ha, brother," said she, "well, I like you all the better for talking Rommany; it is a sweet language, isn't it? especially as you sing it. How did you pick it up? But you picked it up upon the roads, no doubt? Ha, it was funny in you to

pretend not to know it, and you so flush with it all the time; it was not kind in you, however, to frighten the poor person's child so by screaming out, but it was kind in you to give the rikkeni kekaubi to the child of the poor person. She will be grateful to you; she will bring you her little dog to show you, her pretty juggal; the poor person's child will come and see you again; you are not going away to-day, I hope, or to-morrow, pretty brother, grey hair'd brother—you are not going away to-morrow, I hope?"

"Nor the next day," said I, "only to take a stroll to see if I can sell a kettle; good by, little sister, Rommany sister, dingy sister."

"Good by, tall brother," said the girl, as she departed, singing

"The Rommany chi," &c.

"There 's something about that girl that I don't understand," said I to myself; "something mysterious. However, it is nothing to me, she knows not who I am, and if she did, what then?"

Late that evening as I sat on the shaft of my cart in deep meditation, with my arms folded, I thought

I heard a rustling in the bushes over against me. I turned my eyes in that direction, but saw nothing. "Some bird," said I; "an owl, perhaps;" and once more I fell into meditation; my mind wandered from one thing to another—musing now on the structure of the Roman tongue—now on the rise and fall of the Persian power—and now on the powers vested in recorders at quarter sessions. I was thinking what a fine thing it must be to be a recorder of the peace, when, lifting up my eyes, I saw right opposite, not a culprit at the bar, but, staring at me through a gap in the bush, a face wild and strange, half covered with grey hair; I only saw it a moment, the next it had disappeared.

CHAPTER IV.

FRIEND OF SLINGSBY.—ALL QUIET.—DANGER.—THE TWO CAKES.—CHILDREN IN THE WOOD.—DON'T BE ANGRY.—IN DEEP THOUGHT.—TEMPLES THROBBING.—DEADLY SICK.—ANOTHER BLOW.—NO ANSWER.—HOW OLD ARE YOU?—PLAY AND SACRAMENT.—HEAVY HEART.—SONG OF POISON.—DROW OF GYPSIES.—THE DOG.—ELY'S CHURCH.—GET UP, BEBEE.—THE VEHICLE.—CAN YOU SPEAK?—THE OIL.

THE next day, at an early hour, I harnessed my little pony, and, putting my things in my cart, I went on my projected stroll. Crossing the moor, I arrived in about an hour at a small village, from which, after a short stay, I proceeded to another, and from thence to a third. I found that the name of Slingsby was well known in these parts.

"If you are a friend of Slingsby you must be an honest lad," said an ancient crone; "you shall never want for work whilst I can give it you. Here, take my kettle, the bottom came out this morning, and lend me that of yours till you bring it back. I'm not afraid to trust you—not I. Don't hurry yourself, young man, if you don't come back for a fortnight I shan't have the worse opinion of you."

I returned to my quarters at evening, tired, but rejoiced at heart; I had work before me for several days, having collected various kekaubies which required mending, in place of those which I left behind—those which I had been employed upon during the last few days. I found all quiet in the lane or glade, and, unharnessing my little horse, I once more pitched my tent in the old spot beneath the ash, lighted my fire, ate my frugal meal, and then, after looking for some time at the heavenly bodies, and more particularly at the star Jupiter, I entered my tent, lay down upon my pallet, and went to sleep.

Nothing occurred on the following day which requires any particular notice, nor indeed on the one succeeding that. It was about noon on the third day that I sat beneath the shade of the ash tree; I was not at work, for the weather was particularly hot, and I felt but little inclination to make any exertion. Leaning my back against the tree, I was not long in falling into a slumber; I particularly remember that slumber of mine beneath the ash tree, for it was about the sweetest slumber that I ever enjoyed; how long I continued in it I do not

know; I could almost have wished that it had lasted to the present time. All of a sudden it appeared to me that a voice cried in my ear, "Danger! danger! danger!" Nothing seemingly could be more distinct than the words which I heard; then an uneasy sensation came over me, which I strove to get rid of, and at last succeeded, for I awoke. The gypsy girl was standing just opposite to me, with her eyes fixed upon my countenance; a singular kind of little dog stood beside her.

"Ha!" said I, "was it you that cried danger? What danger is there?"

"Danger, brother, there is no danger; what danger should there be? I called to my little dog, but that was in the wood; my little dog's name is not danger, but stranger; what danger should there be, brother?"

"What, indeed, except in sleeping beneath a tree; what is that you have got in your hand?"

"Something for you," said the girl, sitting down and proceeding to untie a white napkin; "a pretty manricli, so sweet, so nice; when I went home to my people I told my grandbebee how kind you had been to the poor person's child, and when my grand-

bebee saw the kekaubi, she said, 'Hir mi devlis, it won't do for the poor people to be ungrateful; by my God, I will bake a cake for the young harko mescro.'"

"But there are two cakes."

"Yes, brother, two cakes, both for you; my grandbebee meant them both for you—but list, brother, I will have one of them for bringing them. I know you will give me one, pretty brother, grey-haired brother—which shall I have, brother?"

In the napkin were two round cakes, seemingly made of rich and costly compounds, and precisely similar in form, each weighing about half a pound.

"Which shall I have, brother?" said the gypsy girl.

"Whichever you please."

"No, brother, no, the cakes are yours, not mine, it is for you to say."

"Well, then, give me the one nearest you, and take the other."

"Yes, brother, yes," said the girl; and taking the cakes, she flung them into the air two or three times, catching them as they fell, and singing the while. "Pretty brother, grey-haired brother—here,

brother," said she, "here is your cake, this other is mine."

"Are you sure," said I, taking the cake, "that this is the one I chose?"

"Quite sure, brother; but if you like you can have mine; there 's no difference, however—shall I eat?"

"Yes, sister, eat."

"See, brother, I do; now, brother, eat, pretty brother, grey-haired brother."

"I am not hungry."

"Not hungry! well, what then—what has being hungry to do with the matter? It is my grandbebee's cake which was sent because you were kind to the poor person's child; eat, brother, eat, and we shall be like the children in the wood that the gorgios speak of."

"The children in the wood had nothing to eat."

"Yes, they had hips and haws; we have better. Eat, brother."

"See, sister, I do," and I ate a piece of the cake.

"Well, brother, how do you like it?" said the girl, looking fixedly at me.

"It is very rich and sweet, and yet there is some-

thing strange about it; I don't think I shall eat any more."

"Fie, brother, fie, to find fault with the poor person's cake; see, I have nearly eaten mine."

"That 's a pretty little dog."

"Is it not, brother? that 's my juggal, my little sister, as I call her."

"Come here, juggal," said I to the animal.

"What do you want with my juggal?" said the girl.

"Only to give her a piece of cake," said I, offering the dog a piece which I had just broken off.

"What do you mean?" said the girl, snatching the dog away; "my grandbebee's cake is not for dogs."

"Why I just now saw you give the animal a piece of yours."

"You lie, brother, you saw no such thing; but I see how it is, you wish to affront the poor person's child. I shall go to my house."

"Keep still, and don't be angry; see, I have eaten the piece which I offered the dog. I meant no offence. It is a sweet cake after all."

"Isn't it, brother? I am glad you like it.

Offence! brother, no offence at all! I am so glad you like my grandbebee's cake, but she will be wanting me at home. Eat one piece more of grandbebee's cake and I will go."

"I am not hungry, I will put the rest by,"

"One piece more before I go, handsome brother, grey-haired brother."

"I will not eat any more, I have already eaten more than I wished to oblige you; if you must go, good day to you."

The girl rose upon her feet, looked hard at me, then at the remainder of the cake which I held in my hand, and then at me again, and then stood for a moment or two, as if in deep thought; presently an air of satisfaction came over her countenance, she smiled and said, "Well, brother, well, do as you please, I merely wished you to eat because you have been so kind to the poor person's child. She loves you so, that she could have wished to have seen you eat it all; good by, brother, I dare say when I am gone you will eat some more of it, and if you don't, I dare say you have eaten enough to—to—show your love for us. After all it was a poor person's cake, a Rommany manricli, and all you gorgios are

somewhat gorgious. Farewell, brother, pretty brother, grey-haired brother. Come, juggal."

I remained under the ash tree seated on the grass for a minute or two, and endeavoured to resume the occupation in which I had been engaged before I fell asleep, but I felt no inclination for labour. I then thought I would sleep again, and once more reclined against the tree, and slumbered for some little time, but my sleep was more agitated than before. Something appeared to bear heavy on my breast, I struggled in my sleep, fell on the grass, and awoke; my temples were throbbing, there was a burning in my eyes, and my mouth felt parched; the oppression about the chest which I had felt in my sleep still continued. "I must shake off these feelings," said I, "and get upon my legs." I walked rapidly up and down upon the green sward; at length, feeling my thirst increase, I directed my steps down the narrow path to the spring which ran amidst the bushes; arriving there, I knelt down and drank of the water, but on lifting up my head I felt thirstier than before; again I drank, but with the like result; I was about to drink for the third time, when I felt a dreadful qualm which instantly robbed

me of nearly all my strength. What can be the matter with me, thought I; but I suppose I have made myself ill by drinking cold water. I got up and made the best of my way back to my tent; before I reached it the qualm had seized me again, and I was deadly sick. I flung myself on my pallet, qualm succeeded qualm, but in the intervals my mouth was dry and burning, and I felt a frantic desire to drink, but no water was at hand, and to reach the spring once more was impossible; the qualms continued, deadly pains shot through my whole frame; I could bear my agonies no longer, and I fell into a trance or swoon. How long I continued therein I know not; on recovering, however, I felt somewhat better, and attempted to lift my head off my couch; the next moment, however, the qualms and pains returned, if possible, with greater violence than before. I am dying, thought I, like a dog, without any help; and then methought I heard a sound at a distance like people singing, and then once more I relapsed into my swoon.

I revived just as a heavy blow sounded upon the canvas of the tent. I started, but my condition did

not permit me to rise; again the same kind of blow sounded upon the canvas; I thought for a moment of crying out and requesting assistance, but an inexplicable something chained my tongue, and now I heard a whisper on the outside of the tent. "He does not move, bebee," said a voice which I knew. "I should not wonder if it has done for him already; however, strike again with your ran;" and then there was another blow, after which another voice cried aloud in a strange tone, "Is the gentleman of the house asleep, or is he taking his dinner?" I remained quite silent and motionless, and in another moment the voice continued, "What, no answer? what can the gentleman of the house be about that he makes no answer? perhaps the gentleman of the house may be darning his stockings?" Thereupon a face peered into the door of the tent, at the farther extremity of which I was stretched. It was that of a woman, but owing to the posture in which she stood, with her back to the light, and partly owing to a large straw bonnet, I could distinguish but very little of the features of her countenance. I had, however, recognised her voice; it was that of my old acquaintance, Mrs. Herne. "Ho, ho, sir!" said

she, "here you are. Come here, Leonora," said she to the gypsy girl, who pressed in at the other side of the door; "here is the gentleman, not asleep, but only stretched out after dinner. Sit down on your ham, child, at the door, I shall do the same. There—you have seen me before, sir, have you not?"

"The gentleman makes no answer, bebee; perhaps he does not know you."

"I have known him of old, Leonora," said Mrs. Herne; "and, to tell you the truth, though I spoke to him just now, I expected no answer."

"It's a way he has, bebee, I suppose?"

"Yes, child, it's a way he has."

"Take off your bonnet, bebee, perhaps he cannot see your face."

"I do not think that will be of much use, child; however, I will take off my bonnet—there—and shake out my hair—there—you have seen this hair before sir, and this face.". . . .

"No answer, bebee."

"Though the one was not quite so grey, nor the other so wrinkled."

"How came they so, bebee?"

"All along of this gorgio, child."

"The gentleman in the house you mean, bebee."

"Yes, child, the gentleman in the house. God grant that I may preserve my temper. Do you know, sir, my name? My name is Herne, which signifies a hairy individual, though neither grey-haired nor wrinkled. It is not the nature of the Hernes to be grey or wrinkled, even when they are old, and I am not old."

"How old are you, bebee?"

"Sixty-five years, child—an inconsiderable number. My mother was a hundred and one—a considerable age—when she died, yet she had not one grey hair, and not more than six wrinkles—an inconsiderable number."

"She had no griefs, bebee?"

"Plenty, child, but not like mine."

"Not quite so hard to bear, bebee?"

"No, child, my head wanders when I think of them. After the death of my husband, who came to his end untimeously, I went to live with a daughter of mine, married out among certain Romans who walk about the eastern counties, and with whom for some time I found a home and pleasant society, for

they lived right Romanly, which gave my heart considerable satisfaction, who am a Roman born, and hope to die so. When I say right Romanly, I mean that they kept to themselves, and were not much given to blabbing about their private matters in promiscuous company. Well, things went on in this way for some time, when one day my son-in-law brings home a young gorgio of singular and outrageous ugliness, and, without much preamble, says to me and mine, 'This is my pall, a'n't he a beauty? fall down and worship him.' 'Hold,' said I, 'I for one will never consent to such foolishness.'"

"That was right, bebee, I think I should have done the same."

"I think you would, child; but what was the profit of it? The whole party makes an almighty of this gorgio, lets him into their ways, says prayers of his making, till things come to such a pass that my own daughter says to me, 'I shall buy myself a veil and fan, and treat myself to a play and sacrament.' 'Don't,' says I; says she, 'I should like for once in my life to be courtesied to as a Christian gentlewoman.'"

" Very foolish of her, bebee."

" Wasn't it, child? Where was I? At the fan and sacrament; with a heavy heart I put seven score miles between us, came back to the hairy ones, and found them over-given to gorgious companions; said I, 'foolish manners is catching, all this comes of that there gorgio.' Answers the child Leonora, 'Take comfort, bebee, I hate the gorgios as much as you do.'"

" And I say so again, bebee, as much or more."

" Time flows on, I engage in many matters, in most miscarry. Am sent to prison; says I to myself, I am become foolish. Am turned out of prison, and go back to the hairy ones, who receive me not over courteously; says I, for their unkindness, and my own foolishness, all the thanks to that gorgio. Answers to me the child, 'I wish I could set eyes upon him, bebee.'"

" I did so, bebee; go on."

"'How shall I know him, bebee?' says the child. 'Young and grey, tall, and speaks Romanly.' Runs to me the child, and says, 'I've found him, bebee.' 'Where, child?' says I. 'Come with me,

bebee,' says the child. 'That's he,' says I, as I looked at my gentleman through the hedge."

"Ha, ha! bebee, and here he lies, poisoned like a hog."

"You have taken drows, sir," said Mrs. Herne; "do you hear, sir? drows; tip him a stave, child, of the song of poison."

And thereupon the girl clapped her hands, and sang—

"The Rommany churl
And the Rommany girl,
To-morrow shall hie
To poison the sty,
And bewitch on the mead
The farmer's steed."

"Do you hear that, sir?" said Mrs. Herne; "the child has tipped you a stave of the song of poison: that is, she has sung it Christianly, though perhaps you would like to hear it Romanly; you were always fond of what was Roman. Tip it him Romanly, child."

"He has heard it Romanly already, bebee; 'twas by that I found him out, as I told you."

"Halloo, sir, are you sleeping? you have taken

drows; the gentleman makes no answer. God give me patience!"

"And what if he doesn't, bebee; isn't he poisoned like a hog? Gentleman! indeed, why call him gentleman? if he ever was one he's broke, and is now a tinker, a worker of blue metal."

"That's his way child, to-day a tinker, to-morrow something else; and as for being drabbed, I don't know what to say about it."

"Not drabbed! what do you mean, bebee? but look there, bebee; ha, ha, look at the gentleman's motions."

"He is sick, child, sure enough. Ho, ho! sir, you have taken drows; what, another throe! writhe sir, writhe, the hog died by the drow of gypsies; I saw him stretched at evening. That's yourself, sir. There is no hope, sir, no help, you have taken drow; shall I tell you your fortune, sir, your dukkerin? God bless you, pretty gentleman, much trouble will you have to suffer, and much water to cross; but never mind, pretty gentleman, you shall be fortunate at the end, and those who hate shall take off their hats to you."

"Hey, bebee!" cried the girl; "what is this?

what do you mean? you have blessed the gorgio!"

"Blessed him! no, sure; what did I say? Oh, I remember, I 'm mad; well, I can't help it, I said what the dukkerin dook told me; woe's me, he 'll get up yet."

"Nonsense, bebee! Look at his motions, he 's drabbed, spite of dukkerin."

"Don't say so, child; he 's sick, 'tis true, but don't laugh at dukkerin, only folks do that that know no better. I, for one, will never laugh at the dukkerin dook. Sick again; I wish he was gone."

"He 'll soon be gone, bebee; let 's leave him. He 's as good as gone; look there, he 's dead."

"No, he 's not, he 'll get up—I feel it; can't we hasten him?"

"Hasten him! yes, to be sure; set the dog upon him. Here, juggal, look in there, my dog."

The dog made its appearance at the door of the tent, and began to bark and tear up the ground.

"At him, juggal, at him; he wished to poison, to drab you. Halloo!"

The dog barked violently, and seemed about to spring at my face, but retreated.

"The dog won't fly at him, child; he flashed at the dog with his eye, and scared him. He 'll get up."

"Nonsense, bebee! you make me angry; how should he get up?"

"The dook tells me so, and, what 's more, I had a dream. I thought I was at York, standing amidst a crowd to see a man hung, and the crowd shouted 'There he comes!' and I looked, and, lo! it was the tinker; before I could cry with joy I was whisked away, and I found myself in Ely's big church, which was chock full of people to hear the dean preach, and all eyes were turned to the big pulpit; and presently I heard them say, 'There he mounts!' and I looked up to the big pulpit, and, lo! the tinker was in the pulpit, and he raised his arm and began to preach. Anon, I found myself at York again, just as the drop fell, and I looked up, and I saw not the tinker, but my own self hanging in the air."

"You are going mad, bebee; if you want to hasten him, take your stick and poke him in the eye."

"That will be of no use, child, the dukkerin tells me so; but I will try what I can do. Halloo, tinker! you must introduce yourself into a quiet family, and raise confusion—must you? You must steal its language, and, what was never done before, write it down Christianly—must you? Take that—and that;" and she stabbed violently with her stick towards the end of the tent.

"That's right, bebee, you struck his face; now once more, and let it be in the eye. Stay, what's that? get up, bebee."

"What's the matter, child?"

"Some one is coming, come away."

"Let me make sure of him, child; he'll be up yet." And thereupon Mrs. Herne, rising, leaned forward into the tent, and, supporting herself against the pole, took aim in the direction of the farther end. "I will thrust out his eye," said she; and, lounging with her stick, she would probably have accomplished her purpose had not at that moment the pole of the tent given way, whereupon she fell to the ground, the canvas falling upon her and her intended victim.

"Here 's a pretty affair, bebee," screamed the girl.

"He 'll get up, yet," said Mrs. Herne, from beneath the canvas.

"Get up!—get up yourself; where are you? where is your .... Here, there, bebee, here 's the door; there, make haste, they are coming."

"He 'll get up yet," said Mrs. Herne, recovering her breath, "the dook tells me so."

"Never mind him or the dook; he is drabbed; come away, or we shall be grabbed—both of us."

"One more blow, I know where his head lies."

"You are mad, bebee; leave the fellow—gorgio avella."

And thereupon the females hurried away.

A vehicle of some kind was evidently drawing nigh; in a little time it came alongside of the place where lay the fallen tent, and stopped suddenly. There was a silence for a moment, and then a parley ensued between two voices, one of which was that of a woman. It was not in English, but in a deep guttural tongue.

"Peth yw hono sydd yn gorwedd yna ar y ddaear?" said a masculine voice.

"Yn wirionedd—I do not know what it can be," said the female voice, in the same tongue.

"Here is a cart, and there are tools; but what is that on the ground?"

"Something moves beneath it; and what was that—a groan?"

"Shall I get down?"

"Of course, Peter, some one may want your help?"

"Then I will get down, though I do not like this place, it is frequented by Egyptians, and I do not like their yellow faces, nor their clibberty clabber, as Master Ellis Wyn says. Now I am down. It is a tent, Winifred, and see, here is a boy beneath it. Merciful father! what a face!"

A middle-aged man, with a strongly marked and serious countenance, dressed in sober-coloured habiliments, had lifted up the stifling folds of the tent, and was bending over me. "Can you speak, my lad?" said he in English, "what is the matter with you? if you could but tell me, I could perhaps help you."...."What is that you say? I can't hear you. I will kneel down;" and he flung himself on the ground, and placed his ear close to my mouth.

" Now speak if you can. Hey! what! no, sure, God forbid!" then starting up, he cried to a female who sat in the cart, anxiously looking on—" Gwenwyn! gwenwyn! yw y gwas wedi ei gwenwynaw. The oil! Winifred, the oil!"

CHAPTER V.

DESIRED EFFECT.—THE THREE OAKS.—WINIFRED.—THINGS OF TIME. — WITH GOD'S WILL. — THE PREACHER. — CREATURE COMFORTS. — CROESAW.— WELSH AND ENGLISH.—MAYOR OF CHESTER.

THE oil, which the strangers compelled me to take, produced the desired effect, though, during at least two hours, it was very doubtful whether or not my life would be saved. At the end of that period the man said, that with the blessing of God, he would answer for my life. He then demanded whether I thought I could bear to be removed from the place in which we were? "for I like it not," he continued, "as something within me tells me that it is not good for any of us to be here." I told him, as well as I was able, that I, too, should be glad to leave the place; whereupon, after collecting my things, he harnessed my pony, and, with the assistance of the woman, he contrived to place me in the cart; he then gave me a draught out of a small phial,

and we set forward at a slow pace, the man walking by the side of the cart in which I lay. It is probable that the draught consisted of a strong opiate, for after swallowing it I fell into a deep slumber; on my awaking, I found that the shadows of night had enveloped the earth—we were still moving on. Shortly, however, after descending a declivity, we turned into a lane, at the entrance of which was a gate. This lane conducted to a meadow, through the middle of which ran a small brook; it stood between two rising grounds, that on the left, which was on the farther side of the water, was covered with wood, whilst the one on the right, which was not so high, was crowned with the white walls of what appeared to be a farm-house.

Advancing along the meadow, we presently came to a place where grew three immense oaks, almost on the side of the brook, over which they flung their arms, so as to shade it as with a canopy; the ground beneath was bare of grass, and nearly as hard and smooth as the floor of a barn. Having led his own cart on one side of the midmost tree, and my own on the other, the stranger said to me, "This is the spot where my wife and myself gene-

rally tarry in the summer season, when we come into these parts. We are about to pass the night here. I suppose you will have no objection to do the same? Indeed, I do not see what else you could do under present circumstances." After receiving my answer, in which I, of course, expressed my readiness to assent to his proposal, he proceeded to unharness his horse, and, feeling myself much better, I got down, and began to make the necessary preparations for passing the night beneath the oak.

Whilst thus engaged, I felt myself touched on the shoulder, and, looking round, perceived the woman, whom the stranger called Winifred, standing close to me. The moon was shining brightly upon her, and I observed that she was very good looking, with a composed, yet cheerful expression of countenance; her dress was plain and primitive, very much resembling that of a Quaker. She held a straw bonnet in her hand. "I am glad to see thee moving about, young man," said she, in a soft, placid tone; "I could scarcely have expected it. Thou must be wondrous strong; many, after what thou hast suffered, would not have stood on their feet for weeks and months. What do I say?—Peter, my

husband, who is skilled in medicine, just now told me that not one in five hundred would have survived what thou hast this day undergone; but allow me to ask thee one thing, Hast thou returned thanks to God for thy deliverance?" I made no answer, and the woman, after a pause, said, "Excuse me, young man, but do you know anything of God?" "Very little," I replied, "but I should say he must be a wondrous strong person, if he made all those big bright things up above there, to say nothing of the ground on which we stand, which bears beings like these oaks, each of which is fifty times as strong as myself, and will live twenty times as long." The woman was silent for some moments, and then said, "I scarcely know in what spirit thy words are uttered. If thou art serious, however, I would caution thee against supposing that the power of God is more manifested in these trees, or even in those bright stars above us, than in thyself—they are things of time, but thou art a being destined to an eternity; it depends upon thyself whether thy eternity shall be one of joy or sorrow."

Here she was interrupted by the man, who ex-

claimed from the other side of the tree, "Winifred, it is getting late, you had better go up to the house on the hill to inform our friends of our arrival, or they will have retired for the night." "True," said Winifred, and forthwith wended her way to the house in question, returning shortly with another woman, whom the man, speaking in the same language which I had heard him first use, greeted by the name of Mary; the woman replied in the same tongue, but almost immediately said, in English, "We hoped to have heard you speak to-night, Peter, but we cannot expect that now, seeing that it is so late, owing to your having been detained by the way, as Winifred tells me; nothing remains for you to do now but to sup—to-morrow, with God's will, we shall hear you." "And to-night, also, with God's will, provided you be so disposed. Let those of your family come hither." "They will be hither presently," said Mary, "for knowing that thou art arrived, they will, of course, come and bid thee welcome." And scarcely had she spoke, when I beheld a party of people descending the moonlit side of the hill. They soon arrived at the place where we were; they might amount in all to twelve

individuals. The principal person was a tall, athletic man, of about forty, dressed like a plain country farmer; this was, I soon found, the husband of Mary; the rest of the group consisted of the children of these two, and their domestic servants. One after another they all shook Peter by the hand, men and women, boys and girls, and expressed their joy at seeing him. After which, he said, "Now, friends, if you please, I will speak a few words to you." A stool was then brought him from the cart, which he stepped on, and the people arranging themselves round him, some standing, some seated on the ground, he forthwith began to address them in a clear, distinct voice; and the subject of his discourse was the necessity, in all human beings, of a change of heart.

The preacher was better than his promise, for, instead of speaking a few words, he preached for at least three quarters of an hour; none of the audience, however, showed the slightest symptom of weariness; on the contrary, the hope of each individual appeared to hang upon the words which proceeded from his mouth. At the conclusion of the sermon or discourse, the whole assembly again

shook Peter by the hand, and returned to their house, the mistress of the family saying, as she departed, "I shall soon be back, Peter, I go but to make arrangements for the supper of thyself and company;" and, in effect, she presently returned, attended by a young woman, who bore a tray in her hands; "Set it down, Jessy," said the mistress to the girl, "and then betake thyself to thy rest, I shall remain here for a little time to talk with my friends." The girl departed, and the preacher and the two females placed themselves on the ground about the tray. The man gave thanks, and himself and his wife appeared to be about to eat, when the latter suddenly placed her hand upon his arm, and said something to him in a low voice, whereupon he exclaimed, "Ay, truly, we were both forgetful;" and then getting up, he came towards me, who stood a little way off, leaning against the wheel of my cart; and, taking me by the hand, he said, "Pardon us, young man, we were both so engaged in our own creature-comforts, that we forgot thee, but it is not too late to repair our fault; wilt thou not join us, and taste our bread and milk?" "I cannot eat," I replied, "but I think I could drink

a little milk;" whereupon he led me to the rest, and seating me by his side, he poured some milk into a horn cup, saying, "'Croesaw.' That," added he, with a smile, "is Welsh for welcome."

The fare upon the tray was of the simplest description, consisting of bread, cheese, milk, and curds. My two friends partook with a good appetite. "Mary," said the preacher, addressing himself to the woman of the house, "every time I come to visit thee, I find thee less inclined to speak Welsh. I suppose, in a little time, thou wilt entirely have forgotten it; hast thou taught it to any of thy children?" "The two eldest understand a few words," said the woman, "but my husband does not wish them to learn it; he says sometimes, jocularly, that though it pleased him to marry a Welsh wife, it does not please him to have Welsh children. Who, I have heard him say, would be a Welshman, if he could be an Englishman?" "I for one," said the preacher, somewhat hastily; "not to be king of all England would I give up my birthright as a Welshman. Your husband is an excellent person, Mary, but I am afraid he is somewhat prejudiced." "You do him justice, Peter, in

saying that he is an excellent person," said the woman; "as to being prejudiced, I scarcely know what to say, but he thinks that two languages in the same kingdom are almost as bad as two kings." "That's no bad observation," said the preacher, "and it is generally the case; yet, thank God, the Welsh and English go on very well, side by side, and I hope will do so till the Almighty calls all men to their long account." "They jog on very well now," said the woman; but I have heard my husband say that it was not always so, and that the Welsh, in old times, were a violent and ferocious people, for that once they hanged the mayor of Chester." "Ha, ha!" said the preacher, and his eyes flashed in the moonlight; "he told you that, did he?" "Yes," said Mary; "once, when the mayor of Chester, with some of his people, was present at one of the fairs over the border, a quarrel arose between the Welsh and the English, and the Welsh beat the English, and hanged the mayor." "Your husband is a clever man," said Peter, "and knows a great deal; did he tell you the name of the leader of the Welsh?" "No! then I will: the leader of the Welsh on that occasion was . . . . .

He was a powerful chieftain, and there was an old feud between him and the men of Chester. Afterwards, when two hundred of the men of Chester invaded his country to take revenge for their mayor, he enticed them into a tower, set fire to it, and burnt them all. That . . . . was a very fine, noble —God forgive me, what was I about to say!—a very bad, violent man; but, Mary, this is very carnal and unprofitable conversation, and in holding it we set a very bad example to the young man here—let us change the subject."

They then began to talk on religious matters. At length Mary departed to her abode, and the preacher and his wife retired to their tilted cart.

"Poor fellow, he seems to be almost brutally ignorant," said Peter, addressing his wife in their native language, after they had bidden me farewell for the night.

"I am afraid he is," said Winifred, "yet my heart warms to the poor lad, he seems so forlorn."

CHAPTER VI.

MORNING HYMN. — MUCH ALONE. — JOHN BUNYAN. — BEHOLDEN TO NOBODY. — SIXTY-FIVE. — SOBER GREETING. — EARLY SABBATHS.— FINNY BROOD.—THE PORCH.—NO FORTUNE-TELLING.—THE MASTER'S NIECE.—DOING GOOD.—TWO OR THREE THINGS.—GROANS AND VOICES. —PECHOD YSPRYDD GLAN.

I SLEPT soundly during that night, partly owing to the influence of the opiate. Early in the morning I was awakened by the voices of Peter and his wife, who were singing a morning hymn in their own language. Both subsequently prayed long and fervently. I lay still till their devotions were completed, and then left my tent. "Good morning," said Peter, "how dost thou feel?" "Much better," said I, "than I could have expected." "I am glad of it," said Peter. "Art thou hungry? yonder comes our breakfast," pointing to the same young woman I had seen the preceding night, who was again descending the hill bearing the tray upon her head.

"What dost thou intend to do, young man, this

day?" said Peter, when we had about half finished breakfast. "Do," said I; "as I do other days, what I can." "And dost thou pass this day as thou dost other days?" said Peter. "Why not?" said I; "what is there in this day different from the rest; it seems to be of the same colour as yesterday." "Art thou aware," said the wife, interposing, "what day it is? that it is Sabbath? that it is Sunday?" "No," said I, "I did not know that it was Sunday." "And how did that happen?" said Winifred, with a sigh. "To tell you the truth," said I, "I live very much alone, and pay very little heed to the passing of time." "And yet of what infinite importance is time," said Winifred. "Art thou not aware that every year brings thee nearer to thy end?" "I do not think," said I, "that I am so near my end as I was yesterday." "Yes, thou art," said the woman; "thou wast not doomed to die yesterday; an invisible hand was watching over thee yesterday; but thy day will come, therefore improve the time; be grateful that thou wast saved yesterday; and, oh! reflect on one thing; if thou hadst died yesterday, where wouldst thou have been now?" "Cast into the earth, per-

haps," said I. "I have heard Mr. Petulengro say that to be cast into the earth is the natural end of man." "Who is Mr. Petulengro?" said Peter, interrupting his wife, as she was about to speak. "Master of the horse-shoe," said I; "and, according to his own account, king of Egypt." "I understand," said Peter, "head of some family of wandering Egyptians—they are a race utterly godless. Art thou of them?—but no, thou art not, thou hast not their yellow blood. I suppose thou belongest to the family of wandering artizans called . . . . I do not like you the worse for belonging to them. A mighty speaker of old sprang up from amidst that family." "Who was he?" said I. "John Bunyan," replied Peter, reverently, "and the mention of his name reminds me that I have to preach this day; wilt thou go and hear? the distance is not great, only half a mile." "No," said I, "I will not go and hear." "Wherefore?" said Peter. "I belong to the church," said I, "and not to the congregations." "Oh! the pride of that church," said Peter, addressing his wife in their own tongue, "exemplified even in the lowest and most ignorant of its members." "Then thou, doubtless, meanest to

go to church," said Peter, again addressing me; "there is a church on the other side of that wooded hill." "No," said I, "I do not mean to go to church." "May I ask thee wherefore?" said Peter. "Because," said I, "I prefer remaining beneath the shade of these trees, listening to the sound of the leaves, and the tinkling of the waters."

"Then thou intendest to remain here?" said Peter, looking fixedly at me. "If I do not intrude," said I; "but if I do, I will wander away; I wish to be beholden to nobody—perhaps you wish me to go?" "On the contrary," said Peter, "I wish you to stay. I begin to see something in thee which has much interest for me; but we must now bid thee farewell for the rest of the day, the time is drawing nigh for us to repair to the place of preaching; before we leave thee alone, however, I should wish to ask thee a question—Didst thou seek thy own destruction yesterday, and didst thou wilfully take that poison?" "No," said I; "had I known there had been poison in the cake I certainly should not have taken it." "And who gave it thee?" said Peter. "An enemy of mine," I replied. "Who is thy enemy?" "An Egyptian sorceress and poison-

monger." "Thy enemy is a female. I fear thou hadst given her cause to hate thee—of what did she complain?" "That I had stolen the tongue out of her head." "I do not understand thee—is she young?" "About sixty-five."

Here Winifred interposed. "Thou didst call her just now by hard names, young man," said she; "I trust thou dost bear no malice against her." "No," said I, "I bear no malice against her." "Thou art not wishing to deliver her into the hand of what is called justice?" "By no means," said I; "I have lived long enough upon the roads not to cry out for the constable when my finger is broken. I consider this poisoning as an accident of the roads; one of those to which those who travel are occasionally subject." "In short, thou forgivest thine adversary?" "Both now and for ever," said I. "Truly," said Winifred, "the spirit which the young man displayeth pleases me much; I should be loth that he left us yet. I have no doubt that, with the blessing of God, and a little of thy exhortation, he will turn out a true Christian before he leaveth us." "My exhortation!" said Peter, and a dark shade passed over his countenance; "thou forgettest what

I am—I—I—but I am forgetting myself; the Lord's will be done; and now put away the things, for I perceive that our friends are coming to attend us to the place of meeting."

Again the family which I had seen the night before descended the hill from their abode. They were now dressed in their Sunday's best. The master of the house led the way. They presently joined us, when a quiet sober greeting ensued on each side. After a little time Peter shook me by the hand and bade me farewell till the evening; Winifred did the same, adding, that she hoped I should be visited by sweet and holy thoughts. The whole party then moved off in the direction by which we had come the preceding night, Peter and the master leading the way, followed by Winifred and the mistress of the family. As I gazed on their departing forms, I felt almost inclined to follow them to their place of worship. I did not stir, however, but remained leaning against my oak with my hands behind me.

And after a time I sat me down at the foot of the oak with my face turned towards the water, and, folding my hands, I fell into deep meditation. I

thought on the early Sabbaths of my life, and the manner in which I was wont to pass them. How carefully I said my prayers when I got up on the Sabbath morn, and how carefully I combed my hair and brushed my clothes in order that I might do credit to the Sabbath day. I thought of the old church at pretty D——, the dignified rector, and yet more dignified clerk. I thought of England's grand Liturgy, and Tate and Brady's sonorous minstrelsy. I thought of the Holy Book, portions of which I was in the habit of reading between service. I thought, too, of the evening walk which I sometimes took in fine weather like the present, with my mother and brother—a quiet sober walk, during which I would not break into a run, even to chase a butterfly, or yet more a honey-bee, being fully convinced of the dread importance of the day which God had hallowed. And how glad I was when I had got over the Sabbath day without having done anything to profane it. And how soundly I slept on the Sabbath night after the toil of being very good throughout the day.

And when I had mused on those times a long while, I sighed and said to myself, I am much

altered since then; am I altered for the better? And then I looked at my hands and my apparel, and sighed again. I was not wont of yore to appear thus on the Sabbath day.

For a long time I continued in a state of deep meditation, till at last I lifted up my eyes to the sun, which, as usual during that glorious summer, was shining in unclouded majesty; and then I lowered them to the sparkling water, in which hundreds of the finny brood were disporting themselves, and then I thought what a fine thing it was to be a fish on such a fine summer day, and I wished myself a fish, or at least amongst the fishes; and then I looked at my hands again, and then, bending over the water, I looked at my face in the crystal mirror, and started when I saw it, for it looked squalid and miserable.

Forthwith I started up, and said to myself, I should like to bathe and cleanse myself from the squalor produced by my late hard life and by Mrs. Herne's drow. I wonder if there is any harm in bathing on the Sabbath day. I will ask Winifred when she comes home; in the mean time I will bathe, provided I can find a fitting place.

But the brook, though a very delightful place for fish to disport in, was shallow, and by no means adapted for the recreation of so large a being as myself; it was, moreover, exposed, though I saw nobody at hand, nor heard a single human voice or sound. Following the winding of the brook I left the meadow, and, passing through two or three thickets, came to a place where between lofty banks the water ran deep and dark, and there I bathed, imbibing new tone and vigour into my languid and exhausted frame.

Having put on my clothes, I returned by the way I had come to my vehicle beneath the oak tree. From thence, for want of something better to do, I strolled up the hill, on the top of which stood the farm-house; it was a large and commodious building built principally of stone, and seeming of some antiquity, with a porch, on either side of which was an oaken bench. On the right was seated a young woman with a book in her hand, the same who had brought the tray to my friends and myself.

"Good day," said I, "pretty damsel, sitting in the farm porch."

"Good day," said the girl, looking at me for a moment, and then fixing her eyes on her book.

"That's a nice book you are reading," said I.

The girl looked at me with surprise. "How do you know what book it is?" said she.

"How do I know—never mind; but a nice book it is—no love, no fortune-telling in it."

The girl looked at me half offended. "Fortune-telling!" said she, "I should think not. But you know nothing about it;" and she bent her head once more over the book.

"I tell you what, young person," said I, "I know all about that book; what will you wager that I do not?"

"I never wager," said the girl.

"Shall I tell you the name of it," said I, "O daughter of the dairy?"

The girl half started. "I should never have thought," said she, half timidly, "that you could have guessed it."

"I did not guess it," said I, "I knew it; and meet and proper it is that you should read it."

"Why so?" said the girl.

"Can the daughter of the dairy read a more fitting book than the 'Dairyman's Daughter?"

"Where do you come from?" said the girl.

"Out of the water," said I. "Don't start, I have been bathing; are you fond of the water?"

"No," said the girl, heaving a sigh; "I am not fond of the water, that is, of the sea;" and here she sighed again.

"The sea is a wide gulf," said I, "and frequently separates hearts."

The girl sobbed.

"Why are you alone here?" said I.

"I take my turn with the rest," said the girl, "to keep at home on Sunday."

"And you are . . . ." said I.

"The master's niece!" said the girl. "How came you to know it? But why did you not go with the rest and with your friends?"

"Who are those you call my friends?" said I.

"Peter and his wife."

"And who are they?" said I.

"Do you not know?" said the girl; "you came with them."

"They found me ill by the way," said I; "and they relieved me: I know nothing about them."

"I thought you knew everything," said the girl.

"There are two or three things which I do not know, and this is one of them. Who are they?"

"Did you never hear of the great Welsh preacher, Peter Williams?"

"Never," said I.

"Well," said the girl, "this is he, and Winifred is his wife, and a nice person she is. Some people say, indeed, that she is as good a preacher as her husband, though of that matter I can say nothing, having never heard her preach. So these two wander over all Wales and the greater part of England, comforting the hearts of the people with their doctrine, and doing all the good they can. They frequently come here, for the mistress is a Welsh woman, and an old friend of both, and then they take up their abode in the cart beneath the old oaks down there by the stream."

"And what is their reason for doing so?" said I; "would it not be more comfortable to sleep beneath a roof?"

"I know not their reasons," said the girl, "but

so it is; they never sleep beneath a roof unless the weather is very severe. I once heard the mistress say that Peter had something heavy upon his mind; perhaps that is the cause. If he is unhappy, all I can say is, that I wish him otherwise, for he is a good man and a kind . . . ."

" Thank you," said I, " I will now depart."

" Hem!" said the girl, " I was wishing . . . ."

" What? to ask me a question?"

" Not exactly; but you seem to know everything; you mentioned, I think, fortune-telling."

" Do you wish me to tell your fortune?"

" By no means; but I have a friend at a distance at sea, and I should wish to know . . . ."

" When he will come back? I have told you already there are two or three things which I do not know—this is another of them. However, I should not be surprised if he were to come back some of these days; I would if I were in his place. In the mean time be patient, attend to the dairy, and read the 'Dairyman's Daughter' when you have nothing better to do."

It was late in the evening when the party of the morning returned. The farmer and his family re-

paired at once to their abode, and my two friends joined me beneath the tree. Peter sat down at the foot of the oak, and said nothing. Supper was brought by a servant, not the damsel of the porch. We sat round the tray, Peter said grace, but scarcely anything else; he appeared sad and dejected, his wife looked anxiously upon him. I was as silent as my friends; after a little time we retired to our separate places of rest.

About midnight I was awakened by a noise; I started up and listened; it appeared to me that I heard voices and groans. In a moment I had issued from my tent—all was silent—but the next moment I again heard groans and voices; they proceeded from the tilted cart where Peter and his wife lay; I drew near, again there was a pause, and then I heard the voice of Peter, in an accent of extreme anguish, exclaim, "Pechod Ysprydd Glan — O pechod Ysprydd Glan!" and then he uttered a deep groan. Anon, I heard the voice of Winifred, and never shall I forget the sweetness and gentleness of the tones of her voice in the stillness of that night. I did not understand all she said—she spoke in her native language, and I was some way apart;

she appeared to endeavour to console her husband, but he seemed to refuse all comfort, and, with many groans, repeated—"Pechod Ysprydd Glan—O pechod Ysprydd Glan!" I felt I had no right to pry into their afflictions, and retired.

Now "pechod Ysprydd Glan," interpreted, is the sin against the Holy Ghost.

CHAPTER VII.

THE FOLLOWING DAY.—PRIDE.—THRIVING TRADE.—TYLWYTH TEG.—ELLIS WYN.—SLEEPING BARD.—INCALCULABLE GOOD.—FEARFUL AGONY.—THE TALE.

PETER and his wife did not proceed on any expedition during the following day. The former strolled gloomily about the fields, and the latter passed many hours in the farmhouse. Towards evening, without saying a word to either, I departed with my vehicle, and finding my way to a small town at some distance, I laid in a store of various articles, with which I returned. It was night, and my two friends were seated beneath the oak; they had just completed their frugal supper. "We waited for thee some time," said Winifred, "but, finding that thou didst not come, we began without thee; but sit down, I pray thee, there is still enough for thee." "I will sit down," said I, "but I require no supper, for I have eaten where I have been:" nothing more

particular occurred at the time. Next morning the kind pair invited me to share their breakfast. "I will not share your breakfast," said I. "Wherefore not?" said Winifred, anxiously. "Because," said I, "it is not proper that I be beholden to you for meat and drink." "But we are beholden to other people," said Winifred. "Yes," said I, "but you preach to them, and give them ghostly advice, which considerably alters the matter; not that I would receive anything from them, if I preached to them six times a day." "Thou art not fond of receiving favours, then, young man," said Winifred. "I am not," said I. "And of conferring favours?" "Nothing affords me greater pleasure," said I, "than to confer favours." "What a disposition," said Winifred, holding up her hands; "and this is pride, genuine pride—that feeling which the world agrees to call so noble. Oh, how mean a thing is pride! never before did I see all the meanness of what is called pride!"

"But how wilt thou live, friend," said Peter, "dost thou not intend to eat?" "When I went out last night," said I, "I laid in a provision." "Thou hast laid in a provision!" said Peter,

"pray let us see it. Really friend," said he, after I had produced it, "thou must drive a thriving trade; here are provisions enough to last three people for several days. Here are butter and eggs, here is tea, here is sugar, and there is a flitch. I hope thou wilt let us partake of some of thy fare." "I should be very happy if you would," said I. "Doubt not but we shall," said Peter; "Winifred shall have some of thy flitch cooked for dinner. In the meantime, sit down, young man, and breakfast at our expense—we will dine at thine."

On the evening of that day, Peter and myself sat alone beneath the oak. We fell into conversation; Peter was at first melancholy, but he soon became more cheerful, fluent, and entertaining. I spoke but little; but I observed that sometimes what I said surprised the good Methodist. We had been silent some time. At length, lifting up my eyes to the broad and leafy canopy of the trees, I said, having nothing better to remark, "What a noble tree! I wonder if the fairies ever dance beneath it?"

"Fairies!" said Peter, "fairies! how came you,

young man, to know anything about the fair family?"

"I am an Englishman," said I, "and of course know something about fairies; England was once a famous place for them."

"Was once, I grant you," said Peter, "but is so no longer. I have travelled for years about England, and never heard them mentioned before; the belief in them has died away, and even their name seems to be forgotten. If you had said you were a Welshman, I should not have been surprised. The Welsh have much to say of the Tylwyth Teg, or fair family, and many believe in them."

"And do you believe in them?" said I.

"I scarcely know what to say. Wise and good men have been of opinion that they are nothing but devils, who, under the form of pretty and amiable spirits, would fain allure poor human beings; I see nothing irrational in the supposition."

"Do you believe in devils then?"

"Do I believe in devils, young man;" said Peter, and his frame was shaken as if by convulsions. "If I do not believe in devils, why am I here at the present moment?"

"You know best," said I; "but I don't believe that fairies are devils, and I don't wish to hear them insulted. What learned men have said they are devils?"

"Many have said it, young man, and, amongst others, Master Ellis Wyn, in that wonderful book of his, the 'Bardd Cwsg.'"

"The 'Bardd Cwsg,'" said I; "what kind of book is that? I have never heard of that book before."

"Heard of it before; I suppose not; how should you have heard of it before! By-the-bye, can you read?"

"Very tolerably," said I; "so there are fairies in this book. What do you call it—the 'Bardd Cwsg?'"

"Yes, the 'Bardd Cwsg.' You pronounce Welsh very fairly; have you ever been in Wales?"

"Never," said I.

"Not been in Wales; then, of course, you don't understand Welsh; but we were talking of the 'Bardd Cwsg,'—yes, there are fairies in the 'Bardd Cwsg,'—the author of it, Master Ellis Wyn, was carried away in his sleep by them over moun-

tains and valleys, rivers and great waters, incurring mighty perils at their hands, till he was rescued from them by an angel of the Most High, who subsequently showed him many wonderful things."

"I beg your pardon," said I, "but what were those wonderful things?"

"I see, young man," said Peter, smiling, "that you are not without curiosity; but I can easily pardon any one for being curious about the wonders contained in the book of Master Ellis Wyn. The angel showed him the course of this world, its pomps and vanities, its cruelty and its pride, its crimes and deceits. On another occasion, the angel showed him Death in his nether palace, surrounded by his grisly ministers, and by those who are continually falling victims to his power. And, on a third occasion, the state of the condemned in their place of everlasting torment."

"But this was all in his sleep," said I, "was it not?"

"Yes," said Peter, "in his sleep; and on that account the book is called 'Gweledigaethau y Bardd Cwsg,' or, Visions of the Sleeping Bard."

"I do not care for wonders which occur in

sleep," said I. "I prefer real ones; and perhaps, notwithstanding what he says, the man had no visions at all—they are probably of his own invention."

"They are substantially true, young man," said Peter; "like the dreams of Bunyan, they are founded on three tremendous facts, Sin, Death, and Hell; and like his they have done incalculable good, at least in my own country, in the language of which they are written. Many a guilty conscience has the 'Bardd Cwsg' aroused with its dreadful sights, its strong sighs, its puffs of smoke from the pit, and its showers of sparks from the mouth of the yet lower gulf of . . . . Unknown—were it not for the 'Bardd Cwsg' perhaps I might not be here."

"I would sooner hear your own tale," said I, "than all the visions of the 'Bardd Cwsg.'"

Peter shook, bent his form nearly double, and covered his face with his hands. I sat still and motionless, with my eyes fixed upon him. Presently Winifred descended the hill, and joined us. "What is the matter?" said she, looking at her husband, who still remained in the posture I have described. He made no answer; whereupon,

laying her hand gently on his shoulder, she said, in the peculiar soft and tender tone which I had heard her use on a former occasion, "Take comfort, Peter; what has happened now to afflict thee?" Peter removed his hand from his face. "The old pain, the old pain," said he; "I was talking with this young man, and he would fain know what brought me here, he would fain hear my tale, Winifred—my sin: O pechod Ysprydd Glan! O pechod Ysprydd Glan!" and the poor man fell into a more fearful agony than before. Tears trickled down Winifred's face, I saw them trickling by the moonlight, as she gazed upon the writhing form of her afflicted husband. I arose from my seat; "I am the cause of all this," said I, "by my folly and imprudence, and it is thus I have returned your kindness and hospitality, I will depart from you and wander my way." I was retiring, but Peter sprang up and detained me. "Go not," said he, "you were not in fault; if there be any fault in the case it was mine; if I suffer, I am but paying the penalty of my own iniquity;" he then paused, and appeared to be considering: at length he said, "Many things which thou hast seen and heard con-

nected with me, require explanation; thou wishest to know my tale, I will tell it thee, but not now, not to-night; I am too much shaken."

Two evenings later, when we were again seated beneath the oak, Peter took the hand of his wife in his own, and then, in tones broken and almost inarticulate, commenced telling me his tale—the tale of the Pechod Yysprydd Glan.

CHAPTER VIII.

TAKING A CUP.—GETTING TO HEAVEN.—AFTER BREAKFAST.—WOODEN GALLERY.—MECHANICAL HABIT.—RESERVED AND GLOOMY.—LAST WORDS.—A LONG TIME.—FROM THE CLOUDS.—RAY OF HOPE.—MOMENTARY CHILL.—PLEASING ANTICIPATION.

"I WAS born in the heart of North Wales, the son of a respectable farmer, and am the youngest of seven brothers.

"My father was a member of the Church of England, and was what is generally called a serious man. He went to church regularly, and read the Bible every Sunday evening; in his moments of leisure he was fond of holding religious discourse both with his family and his neighbours.

"One autumn afternoon, on a week day, my father sat with one of his neighbours taking a cup of ale by the oak table in our stone kitchen. I sat near them, and listened to their discourse. I was at that time seven years of age. They were talking of religious matters. 'It is a hard matter to get to

heaven,' said my father. 'Exceedingly so,' said the other. 'However, I don't despond, none need despair of getting to heaven, save those who have committed the sin against the Holy Ghost.'

"'Ah!' said my father, 'thank God I never committed that—how awful must be the state of a person who has committed the sin against the Holy Ghost. I can scarcely think of it without my hair standing on end;' and then my father and his friend began talking of the nature of the sin against the Holy Ghost, and I heard them say what it was, as I sat with greedy ears listening to their discourse.

"I lay awake the greater part of the night musing upon what I had heard. I kept wondering to myself what must be the state of a person who had committed the sin against the Holy Ghost, and how he must feel. Once or twice I felt a strong inclination to commit it, a strange kind of fear, however, prevented me; at last I determined not to commit it, and, having said my prayers, I fell asleep.

"When I awoke in the morning the first thing I thought of was the mysterious sin, and a voice within me seemed to say, 'Commit it;' and I felt a strong temptation to do so, even stronger than in

the night. I was just about to yield, when the same dread, of which I have already spoken, came over me, and, springing out of bed, I went down on my knees. I slept in a small room alone, to which I ascended by a wooden stair, open to the sky. I have often thought since that it is not a good thing for children to sleep alone.

"After breakfast I went to school, and endeavoured to employ myself upon my tasks, but all in vain; I could think of nothing but the sin against the Holy Ghost; my eyes, instead of being fixed upon my book, wandered in vacancy. My master observed my inattention, and chid me. The time came for saying my task, and I had not acquired it. My master reproached me, and, yet more, he beat me; I felt shame and anger, and I went home with a full determination to commit the sin against the Holy Ghost.

"But when I got home my father ordered me to do something connected with the farm, so that I was compelled to exert myself; I was occupied till night, and was so busy that I almost forgot the sin and my late resolution. My work completed, I took my supper, and went to my room; I began

my prayers, and, when they were ended, I thought of the sin, but the temptation was slight, I felt very tired, and was presently asleep.

"Thus, you see, I had plenty of time allotted me by a gracious and kind God to reflect on what I was about to do. He did not permit the enemy of souls to take me by surprise, and to hurry me at once into the commission of that which was to be my ruin here and hereafter. Whatever I did was of my own free will, after I had had time to reflect. Thus God is justified; he had no hand in my destruction, but, on the contrary, he did all that was compatible with justice to prevent it. I hasten to the fatal moment. Awaking in the night, I determined that nothing should prevent my committing the sin. Arising from my bed, I went out upon the wooden gallery; and having stood for a few moments looking at the stars, with which the heavens were thickly strewn, I laid myself down, and supporting my face with my hand, I murmured out words of horror, words not to be repeated, and in this manner I committed the sin against the Holy Ghost.

"When the words were uttered I sat up upon the

topmost step of the gallery; for some time I felt stunned in somewhat the same manner as I once subsequently felt after being stung by an adder. I soon arose, however, and retired to my bed, where, notwithstanding what I had done, I was not slow in falling asleep.

"I awoke several times during the night, each time with the dim idea that something strange and monstrous had occurred, but I presently fell asleep again; in the morning I awoke with the same vague feeling, but presently recollection returned, and I remembered that I had committed the sin against the Holy Ghost. I lay musing for some time on what I had done, and I felt rather stunned, as before; at last I arose and got out of bed, dressed myself, and then went down on my knees, and was about to pray from the force of mechanical habit; before I said a word, however, I recollected myself, and got up again. What was the use of praying? I thought; I had committed the sin against the Holy Ghost.

I went to school, but sat stupified. I was again chidden, again beaten by my master. I felt no anger this time, and scarcely heeded the strokes. I looked, however, at my master's face, and thought to my-

self, you are beating me for being idle, as you suppose; poor man, what would you do if you knew I had committed the sin against the Holy Ghost?

"Days and weeks passed by. I had once been cheerful, and fond of the society of children of my own age; but I was now reserved and gloomy. It seemed to me that a gulf separated me from all my fellow-creatures. I used to look at my brothers and schoolfellows, and think how different I was from them; they had not done what I had. I seemed, in my own eyes, a lone monstrous being, and yet, strange to say, I felt a kind of pride in being so. I was unhappy, but I frequently thought to myself, I have done what no one else would dare to do; there was something grand in the idea; I had yet to learn the horror of my condition.

"Time passed on, and I began to think less of what I had done; I began once more to take pleasure in my childish sports; I was active, and excelled at foot-ball and the like all the lads of my age. I likewise began, what I had never done before, to take pleasure in the exercises of the school. I made great progress in Welsh and English grammar, and learnt to construe Latin. My master no

longer chid or beat me, but one day told my father that he had no doubt that one day I should be an honour to Wales.

"Shortly after this my father fell sick; the progress of the disorder was rapid; feeling his end approaching, he called his children before him. After tenderly embracing us, he said 'God bless you, my children, I am going from you, but take comfort, I trust that we shall all meet again in heaven.'

"As he uttered these last words, horror took entire possession of me. Meet my father in heaven,—how could I ever hope to meet him there? I looked wildly at my brethren and at my mother; they were all bathed in tears, but how I envied them. They might hope to meet my father in heaven, but how different were they from me, they had never committed the unpardonable sin.

"In a few days my father died; he left his family in comfortable circumstances, at least such as would be considered so in Wales, where the wants of the people are few. My elder brother carried on the farm for the benefit of my mother and us all. In course of time my brothers were put out to various trades. I still remained at school, but

without being a source of expense to my relations, as I was by this time able to assist my master in the business of the school.

"I was diligent both in self-improvement and in the instruction of others; nevertheless, a horrible weight pressed upon my breast; I knew I was a lost being; that for me there was no hope; that, though all others might be saved, I must of necessity be lost: I had committed the unpardonable sin, for which I was doomed to eternal punishment, in the flaming gulf, as soon as life was over!—and how long could I hope to live? perhaps fifty years; at the end of which I must go to my place; and then I would count the months and the days, nay, even the hours which yet intervened between me and my doom. Sometimes I would comfort myself with the idea that a long time would elapse before my time would be out; but then again I thought that, however long the term might be, it must be out at last; and then I would fall into an agony, during which I would almost wish that the term were out, and that I were in my place; the horrors of which I thought could scarcely be worse than what I then endured.

"There was one thought about this time which caused me unutterable grief and shame, perhaps more shame than grief. It was that my father, who was gone to heaven, and was there daily holding communion with his God, was by this time aware of my crime. I imagined him looking down from the clouds upon his wretched son, with a countenance of inexpressible horror. When this idea was upon me, I would often rush to some secret place to hide myself; to some thicket, where I would cast myself on the ground, and thrust my head into a thick bush, in order to escape from the horror-struck glance of my father above in the clouds; and there I would continue groaning till the agony had, in some degree, passed away.

"The wretchedness of my state increasing daily, it at last became apparent to the master of the school, who questioned me earnestly and affectionately. I, however, gave him no satisfactory answer, being apprehensive that, if I unbosomed myself, I should become as much an object of horror to him as I had long been to myself. At length he suspected that I was unsettled in my intellects; and, fearing probably the ill effect of my presence upon his

scholars, he advised me to go home; which I was glad to do, as I felt myself every day becoming less qualified for the duties of the office which I had undertaken.

"So I returned home to my mother and my brother, who received me with the greatest kindness and affection. I now determined to devote myself to husbandry, and assist my brother in the business of the farm. I was still, however, very much distressed. One fine morning, however, as I was at work in the field, and the birds were carolling around me, a ray of hope began to break upon my poor dark soul. I looked at the earth and looked at the sky, and felt as I had not done for many a year; presently a delicious feeling stole over me. I was beginning to enjoy existence. I shall never forget that hour. I flung myself on the soil, and kissed it; then, springing up with a sudden impulse, I rushed into the depths of a neighbouring wood, and, falling upon my knees, did what I had not done for a long, long time—prayed to God.

"A change, an entire change, seemed to have come over me. I was no longer gloomy and despairing, but gay and happy. My slumbers were light and

easy; not disturbed, as before, by frightful dreams. I arose with the lark, and like him uttered a cheerful song of praise to God, frequently and earnestly, and was particularly cautious not to do anything which I considered might cause his displeasure.

"At church I was constant, and when there listened with deepest attention to every word which proceeded from the mouth of the minister. In a little time it appeared to me that I had become a good, very good young man. At times the recollection of the sin would return, and I would feel a momentary chill; but the thought quickly vanished, and I again felt happy and secure.

"One Sunday morning, after I had said my prayers, I felt particularly joyous. I thought of the innocent and virtuous life I was leading; and when the recollection of the sin intruded for a moment, I said, 'I am sure God will never utterly cast away so good a creature as myself.' I went to church, and was as usual attentive. The subject of the sermon was on the duty of searching the Scriptures: all I knew of them was from the liturgy. I now, however, determined to read them, and perfect the good work which I had begun. My father's Bible was

upon the shelf, and on that evening I took it with me to my chamber. I placed it on the table, and sat down. My heart was filled with pleasing anticipation. I opened the book at random, and began to read; the first passage on which my eyes lighted was the following:—

"'He who committeth the sin against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven, either in this world or the next.'"

Here Peter was seized with convulsive tremors. Winifred sobbed violently. I got up, and went away. Returning in about a quarter of an hour, I found him more calm; he motioned me to sit down; and, after a short pause, continued his narration.

CHAPTER IX.

HASTY FAREWELL.—LOFTY ROCK.—WRESTLINGS OF JACOB.—NO REST.—WAYS OF PROVIDENCE.—TWO FEMALES.—FOOT OF THE CROSS.—ENEMY OF SOULS.—PERPLEXED.—LUCKY HOUR.—VALETUDINARIAN.—METHODISTS.—FERVENT IN PRAYER.—YOU SAXONS.—WEAK CREATURES.—VERY AGREEABLE.—ALMOST HAPPY.—KINDNESS AND SOLICITUDE.

"WHERE was I, young man? Oh, I remember, at the fatal passage which removed all hope. I will not dwell on what I felt. I closed my eyes, and wished that I might be dreaming; but it was no dream, but a terrific reality: I will not dwell on that period, I should only shock you. I could not bear my feelings; so, bidding my friends a hasty farewell, I abandoned myself to horror and despair, and ran wild through Wales, climbing mountains and wading streams.

"Climbing mountains and wading streams, I ran wild about, I was burnt by the sun, drenched by the rain, and had frequently at night no other covering than the sky, or the humid roof of some cave; but nothing seemed to affect my constitution;

probably the fire which burned within me counteracted what I suffered from without. During the space of three years I scarcely knew what befel me; my life was a dream—a wild, horrible dream; more than once I believe I was in the hands of robbers, and once in the hands of gypsies. I liked the last description of people least of all; I could not abide their yellow faces, or their ceaseless clabber. Escaping from these beings, whose countenances and godless discourse brought to my mind the demons of the deep Unknown, I still ran wild through Wales, I know not how long. On one occasion, coming in some degree to my recollection, I felt myself quite unable to bear the horrors of my situation; looking round I found myself near the sea; instantly the idea came into my head that I would cast myself into it, and thus anticipate my final doom. I hesitated a moment, but a voice within me seemed to tell me that I could do no better; the sea was near, and I could not swim, so I determined to fling myself into the sea. As I was running along at great speed, in the direction of a lofty rock, which beetled over the waters, I suddenly felt myself seized by the coat. I strove

to tear myself away, but in vain; looking round, I perceived a venerable hale old man, who had hold of me. 'Let me go!' said I, fiercely. 'I will not let thee go,' said the old man, and now instead of with one, he grappled me with both hands. 'In whose name dost thou detain me?' said I, scarcely knowing what I said. 'In the name of my Master, who made thee and yonder sea; and has said to the sea, so far shalt thou come, and no farther, and to thee, thou shalt do no murder.' 'Has not a man a right to do what he pleases with his own?' said I. 'He has,' said the old man, 'but thy life is not thy own; thou art accountable for it to thy God. Nay, I will not let thee go,' he continued, as I again struggled; 'if thou struggle with me the whole day I will not let thee go, as Charles Wesley says, in his "Wrestlings of Jacob;" and see, it is of no use struggling, for I am, in the strength of my Master, stronger than thou;' and, indeed, all of a sudden I had become very weak and exhausted; whereupon the old man, beholding my situation, took me by the arm and led me gently to a neighbouring town, which stood behind a hill, and which I had not before observed; presently he

opened the door of a respectable-looking house, which stood beside a large building having the appearance of a chapel, and conducted me into a small room, with a great many books in it. Having caused me to sit down, he stood looking at me for some time, occasionally heaving a sigh. I was, indeed, haggard and forlorn. 'Who art thou?' he said at last. 'A miserable man,' I replied. 'What makes thee miserable?' said the old man. 'A hideous crime,' I replied. 'I can find no rest; like Cain I wander here and there.' The old man turned pale. 'Hast thou taken another's life?' said he; 'if so, I advise thee to surrender thyself to the magistrate; thou canst do no better; thy doing so will be the best proof of thy repentance; and though there be no hope for thee in this world there may be much in the next.' 'No,' said I, 'I have never taken another's life.' 'What then, another's goods? If so, restore them seven-fold, if possible: or, if it be not in thy power, and thy conscience accuse thee, surrender thyself to the magistrate, and make the only satisfaction thou art able.' 'I have taken no one's goods,' said I. 'Of what art thou guilty, then?' said he. 'Art

thou a drunkard? a profligate?' 'Alas, no,' said I; 'I am neither of these; would that I were no worse.'

"Thereupon the old man looked steadfastly at me for some time; then, after appearing to reflect, he said, 'Young man, I have a great desire to know your name.' 'What matters it to you what is my name?' said I; 'you know nothing of me.' 'Perhaps you are mistaken,' said the old man, looking kindly at me; 'but at all events tell me your name.' I hesitated a moment, and then told him who I was, whereupon he exclaimed with much emotion, 'I thought so; how wonderful are the ways of Providence. I have heard of thee, young man, and know thy mother well. Only a month ago, when upon a journey, I experienced much kindness from her. She was speaking to me of her lost child, with tears; she told me that you were one of the best of sons, but that some strange idea appeared to have occupied your mind. Despair not, my son. If thou hast been afflicted, I doubt not but that thy affliction will eventually turn out to thy benefit; I doubt not but that thou wilt be preserved, as an example of the great mercy

of God. I will now kneel down and pray for thee, my son.'

"He knelt down, and prayed long and fervently. I remained standing for some time; at length I knelt down likewise. I scarcely knew what he was saying, but when he concluded I said 'Amen.'

"And when we had risen from our knees, the old man left me for a short time, and on his return led me into another room, where were two females; one was an elderly person, the wife of the old man,—the other was a young woman of very prepossessing appearance (hang not down thy head, Winifred), who I soon found was a distant relation of the old man,—both received me with great kindness, the old man having doubtless previously told them who I was.

"I staid several days in the good man's house. I had still the greater portion of a small sum which I happened to have about me when I departed on my dolorous wandering, and with this I purchased clothes, and altered my appearance considerably. On the evening of the second day, my friend said, 'I am going to preach, perhaps you will come and hear me.' I consented, and we all went, not to

a church, but to the large building next the house; for the old man, though a clergyman, was not of the established persuasion, and there the old man mounted a pulpit, and began to preach. 'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden,' &c., &c., was his text. His sermon was long, but I still bear the greater portion of it in my mind.

"The substance of it was that Jesus was at all times ready to take upon himself the burden of our sins, provided we came to him with a humble and contrite spirit, and begged his help. This doctrine was new to me; I had often been at church, but had never heard it preached before, at least so distinctly. When he said that all men might be saved, I shook, for I expected he would add, all except those who had committed the mysterious sin; but no, all men were to be saved who with a humble and contrite spirit would come to Jesus, cast themselves at the foot of his cross, and accept pardon through the merits of his blood-shedding alone. 'Therefore, my friends,' said he, in conclusion, 'despair not—however guilty you may be, despair not—however desperate your condition may seem,' said he, fixing his eyes upon me, 'despair

not. There is nothing more foolish and more wicked than despair; overweening confidence is not more foolish than despair; both are the favourite weapons of the enemy of souls.'

"This discourse gave rise in my mind to no slight perplexity. I had read in the Scriptures that he who committeth a certain sin shall never be forgiven, and that there is no hope for him either in this world or the next. And here was a man, a good man certainly, and one who, of necessity, was thoroughly acquainted with the Scriptures, who told me that any one might be forgiven, however wicked, who would only trust in Christ and in the merits of his blood-shedding. Did I believe in Christ? Ay, truly. Was I willing to be saved by Christ? Ay, truly. Did I trust in Christ? I trusted that Christ would save every one but myself. And why not myself? simply because the Scriptures had told me that he who has committed the sin against the Holy Ghost can never be saved, and I had committed the sin against the Holy Ghost,—perhaps the only one who ever had committed it. How could I hope? The Scriptures could not lie, and yet here was this good

old man, profoundly versed in the Scriptures, who bade me hope; would he lie? No. But did the old man know my case? Ah, no, he did not know my case! but yet he had bid me hope, whatever I had done, provided I would go to Jesus. But how could I think of going to Jesus, when the Scriptures told me plainly that all would be useless? I was perplexed, and yet a ray of hope began to dawn in my soul. I thought of consulting the good man, but I was afraid he would drive away the small glimmer. I was afraid he would say, 'O, yes, every one is to be saved, except a wretch like you; I was not aware before that there was anything so horrible,—begone!' Once or twice the old man questioned me on the subject of my misery, but I evaded him; once, indeed, when he looked particularly benevolent, I think I should have unbosomed myself to him, but we were interrupted. He never pressed me much; perhaps he was delicate in probing my mind, as we were then of different persuasions. Hence he advised me to seek the advice of some powerful minister in my own church; there were many such in it, he said.

"I staid several days in the family, during which time I more than once heard my venerable friend preach; each time he preached, he exhorted his hearers not to despair. The whole family were kind to me; his wife frequently discoursed with me, and also the young person to whom I have already alluded. It appeared to me that the latter took a peculiar interest in my fate.

"At last my friend said to me, 'It is now time thou shouldest return to thy mother and thy brother.' So I arose, and departed to my mother and my brother; and at my departure my old friend gave me his blessing, and his wife and the young person shed tears, the last especially. And when my mother saw me, she shed tears, and fell on my neck and kissed me, and my brother took me by the hand and bade me welcome; and when our first emotions were subsided, my mother said, 'I trust thou art come in a lucky hour. A few weeks ago my cousin (whose favourite thou always wast) died and left thee his heir—left thee the goodly farm in which he lived. I trust, my son, that thou wilt now settle, and be a comfort to me in my old days.' And I answered, 'I will, if so please the Lord;'

and I said to myself, 'God grant that this bequest be a token of the Lord's favour.'

"And in a few days I departed to take possession of my farm; it was about twenty miles from my mother's house, in a beautiful but rather wild district; I arrived at the fall of the leaf. All day long I busied myself with my farm, and thus kept my mind employed. At night, however, I felt rather solitary, and I frequently wished for a companion. Each night and morning I prayed fervently unto the Lord; for His hand had been very heavy upon me, and I feared Him.

"There was one thing connected with my new abode, which gave me considerable uneasiness—the want of spiritual instruction. There was a church, indeed, close at hand, in which service was occasionally performed, but in so hurried and heartless a manner that I derived little benefit from it. The clergyman to whom the benefice belonged was a valetudinarian, who passed his time in London, or at some watering-place, entrusting the care of his flock to the curate of a distant parish, who gave himself very little trouble about the matter. Now I wanted every Sunday to hear from the pulpit words

of consolation and encouragement, similar to those which I had heard uttered from the pulpit by my good and venerable friend, but I was debarred from this privilege. At length, one day being in conversation with one of my labourers, a staid and serious man, I spoke to him of the matter which lay heavy upon my mind; whereupon, looking me wistfully in the face, he said, 'Master, the want of religious instruction in my church was what drove me to the Methodists.' 'The Methodists,' said I, 'are there any in these parts?' 'There is a chapel,' said he, 'only half a mile distant, at which there are two services every Sunday, and other two during the week.' Now it happened that my venerable friend was of the Methodist persuasion, and when I heard the poor man talk in this manner, I said to him, 'May I go with you next Sunday?' 'Why not?' said he; so I went with the labourer on the ensuing Sabbath to the meeting of the Methodists.

"I liked the preaching which I heard at the chapel very well, though it was not quite so comfortable as that of my old friend, the preacher being in some respects a different kind of man. It, however, did me good, and I went again, and continued

to do so, though I did not become a regular member of the body at that time.

"I had now the benefit of religious instruction, and also to a certain extent of religious fellowship, for the preacher and various members of his flock frequently came to see me. They were honest plain men, not exactly of the description which I wished for, but still good sort of people, and I was glad to see them. Once on a time, when some of them were with me, one of them enquired whether I was fervent in prayer. 'Very fervent,' said I. 'And do you read the Scriptures often?' said he. 'No,' said I. 'Why not?' said he. 'Because I am afraid to see there my own condemnation.' They looked at each other, and said nothing at the time. On leaving me, however, they all advised me to read the Scriptures with fervency and prayer.

"As I had told these honest people, I shrank from searching the Scriptures; the remembrance of the fatal passage was still too vivid in my mind to permit me. I did not wish to see my condemnation repeated, but I was very fervent in prayer, and almost hoped that God would yet forgive me by virtue of the blood-shedding of the Lamb.

Time passed on, my affairs prospered, and I enjoyed a certain portion of tranquillity. Occasionally, when I had nothing else to do, I renewed my studies. Many is the book I read, especially in my native language, for I was always fond of my native language, and proud of being a Welshman. Amongst the books I read were the odes of the great Ab Gwilym, whom thou, friend, hast never heard of; no, nor any of thy countrymen, for you are an ignorant race, you Saxons, at least with respect to all that relates to Wales and Welshmen. I likewise read the book of Master Ellis Wyn. The latter work possessed a singular fascination for me, on account of its wonderful delineations of the torments of the nether world.

"But man does not love to be alone; indeed, the Scripture says that it is not good for man to be alone. I occupied my body with the pursuits of husbandry, and I improved my mind with the perusal of good and wise books; but, as I have already said, I frequently sighed for a companion with whom I could exchange ideas, and who could take an interest in my pursuits; the want of such a one I more particularly felt in the long winter

evenings. It was then that the image of the young person whom I had seen in the house of the preacher frequently rose up distinctly before my mind's eye, decked with quiet graces—hang not down your head, Winifred—and I thought that of all the women in the world I should wish her to be my partner, and then I considered whether it would be possible to obtain her. I am ready to acknowledge, friend, that it was both selfish and wicked in me to wish to fetter any human being to a lost creature like myself, conscious of having committed a crime for which the Scriptures told me there is no pardon. I had, indeed, a long struggle as to whether I should make the attempt or not—selfishness however prevailed. I will not detain your attention with relating all that occurred at this period—suffice it to say that I made my suit and was successful; it is true that the old man, who was her guardian, hesitated, and asked several questions respecting my state of mind. I am afraid that I partly deceived him, perhaps he partly deceived himself; he was pleased that I had adopted his profession—we are all weak creatures. With respect to the young person, she

did not ask many questions; and I soon found that I had won her heart. To be brief, I married her; and here she is, the truest wife that ever man had, and the kindest. Kind I may well call her, seeing that she shrinks not from me, who so cruelly deceived her, in not telling her at first what I was. I married her, friend; and brought her home to my little possession, where we passed our time very agreeably. Our affairs prospered, our garners were full, and there was coin in our purse. I worked in the field; Winifred busied herself with the dairy. At night I frequently read books to her, books of my own country, friend; I likewise read to her songs of my own, holy songs and carols which she admired, and which yourself would perhaps admire, could you understand them; but I repeat, you Saxons are an ignorant people with respect to us, and a perverse, inasmuch as you despise Welsh without understanding it. Every night I prayed fervently, and my wife admired my gift of prayer.

"One night, after I had been reading to my wife a portion of Ellis Wyn, my wife said, 'This is a wonderful book, and containing much true and

pleasant doctrine; but how is it that you, who are so fond of good books, and good things in general, never read the Bible? You read me the book of Master Ellis Wyn, you read me sweet songs of your own composition, you edify me with your gift of prayer, but yet you never read the Bible.' And when I heard her mention the Bible I shook, for I thought of my own condemnation. However, I dearly loved my wife, and as she pressed me, I commenced on that very night reading the Bible. All went on smoothly for a long time; for months and months I did not find the fatal passage, so that I almost thought that I had imagined it. My affairs prospered much the while, so that I was almost happy, — taking pleasure in everything around me,—in my wife, in my farm, my books and compositions, and the Welsh language; till one night, as I was reading the Bible, feeling particularly comfortable, a thought having just come into my head that I would print some of my compositions, and purchase a particular field of a neighbour—oh God—God! I came to the fatal passage.

"Friend, friend, what shall I say? I rushed out. My wife followed me, asking me what was

the matter. I could only answer with groans—for three days and three nights I did little else than groan. Oh, the kindness and solicitude of my wife! 'What is the matter, husband, dear husband?' she was continually saying. I became at last more calm. My wife still persisted in asking me the cause of my late paroxysm. It is hard to keep a secret from a wife, especially such a wife as mine, so I told my wife the tale, as we sat one night—it was a mid-winter night—over the dying brands of our hearth, after the family had retired to rest, her hand locked in mine, even as it is now.

"I thought she would have shrunk from me with horror; but she did not; her hand, it is true, trembled once or twice; but that was all. At last she gave mine a gentle pressure; and, looking up in my face, she said—what do you think my wife said, young man?"

"It is impossible for me to guess," said I.

"Let us go to rest, my love; your fears are all groundless."

CHAPTER X.

GETTING LATE. — SEVEN YEARS OLD.—CHASTENING.— GO FORTH.— LONDON BRIDGE.—SAME EYES.—COMMON OCCURRENCE.—VERY SLEEPY.

"And so I still say," said Winifred, sobbing. "Let us retire to rest, dear husband; your fears are groundless. I had hoped long since that your affliction would have passed away, and I still hope that it eventually will; so take heart, Peter, and let us retire to rest, for it is getting late."

"Rest!" said Peter; "there is no rest for the wicked!"

"We are all wicked," said Winifred; "but you are afraid of a shadow. How often have I told you that the sin of your heart is not the sin against the Holy Ghost: the sin of your heart is its natural pride, of which you are scarcely aware, to keep down which God in His mercy permitted you to

be terrified with the idea of having committed a sin which you never committed."

"Then you will still maintain," said Peter, "that I never committed the sin against the Holy Spirit?"

"I will," said Winifred; "you never committed it. How should a child seven years old commit a sin like that?"

"Have I not read my own condemnation?" said Peter. "Did not the first words which I read in the Holy Scripture condemn me? 'He who committeth the sin against the Holy Ghost shall never enter into the kingdom of God.'"

"You never committed it," said Winifred.

"But the words! the words! the words!" said Peter.

"The words are true words," said Winifred, sobbing; "but they were not meant for you, but for those who have broken their profession, who, having embraced the cross, have receded from their Master."

"And what sayst thou to the effect which the words produced upon me?" said Peter. "Did they

not cause me to run wild through Wales for years, like Merddin Wyllt of yore; thinkest thou that I opened the book at that particular passage by chance?"

"No," said Winifred, "not by chance; it was the hand of God directed you, doubtless for some wise purpose. You had become satisfied with yourself. The Lord wished to rouse thee from thy state of carnal security, and therefore directed your eyes to that fearful passage."

"Does the Lord then carry out his designs by means of guile?" said Peter, with a groan. "Is not the Lord true? Would the Lord impress upon me that I had committed a sin of which I am guiltless? Hush, Winifred! hush! thou knowest that I have committed the sin."

"Thou hast not committed it," said Winifred, sobbing yet more violently. "Were they my last words, I would persist that thou hast not committed it, though, perhaps, thou wouldst, but for this chastening; it was not to convince thee that thou hast committed the sin, but rather to prevent thee from committing it, that the Lord brought that

passage before thy eyes. He is not to blame, if thou art wilfully blind to the truth and wisdom of his ways."

"I see thou wouldst comfort me," said Peter, "as thou hast often before attempted to do. I would fain ask the young man his opinion."

"I have not yet heard the whole of your history," said I.

"My story is nearly told," said Peter; "a few words will complete it. My wife endeavoured to console and reassure me, using the arguments which you have just heard her use, and many others, but in vain. Peace nor comfort came to my breast. I was rapidly falling into the depths of despair; when one day Winifred said to me, 'I see thou wilt be lost, if we remain here. One resource only remains. Thou must go forth, my husband, into the wide world, and to comfort thee I will go with thee.' 'And what can I do in the wide world?' said I, despondingly. 'Much,' replied Winifred, 'if you will but exert yourself; much good canst thou do with the blessing of God.' Many things of the same kind she said to me; and at last I arose from the earth to which God had smitten me, and dis-

posed of my property in the best way I could, and went into the world. We did all the good we were able, visiting the sick, ministering to the sick, and praying with the sick. At last I became celebrated as the possessor of a great gift of prayer. And people urged me to preach, and Winifred urged me too, and at last I consented, and I preached. I—I—outcast Peter, became the preacher Peter Williams. I, the lost one, attempted to show others the right road. And in this way I have gone on for thirteen years, preaching and teaching, visiting the sick, and ministering to them, with Winifred by my side hearkening me on. Occasionally I am visited with fits of indescribable agony, generally on the night before the Sabbath; for I then ask myself, how dare I, the outcast, attempt to preach the word of God? Young man, my tale is told; you seem in thought!"

"I am thinking of London Bridge," said I.

"Of London Bridge!" said Peter and his wife.

"Yes," said I, "of London Bridge. I am indebted for much wisdom to London Bridge; it was there that I completed my studies. But to the point. I was once reading on London Bridge a book

which an ancient gentlewoman, who kept the bridge, was in the habit of lending me; and there I found written, 'Each one carries in his breast the recollection of some sin which presses heavy upon him. O! if men could but look into each other's hearts, what blackness would they find there!'"

"That's true," said Peter. "What is the name of the book?"

"'The Life of Blessed Mary Flanders.'"

"Some popish saint, I suppose," said Peter.

"As much of a saint, I dare say," said I, "as most popish ones; but you interrupted me. One part of your narrative brought the passage which I have quoted into my mind. You said that after you had committed this same sin of yours you were in the habit, at school, of looking upon your schoolfellows with a kind of gloomy superiority, considering yourself a lone monstrous being who had committed a sin far above the daring of any of them. Are you sure that many others of your schoolfellows were not looking upon you and the others with much the same eyes with which you were looking upon them?"

"How!" said Peter, "dost thou think that they had divined my secret?"

"Not they," said I, "they were, I dare say, thinking too much of themselves and of their own concerns to have divined any secrets of yours. All I mean to say is, they had probably secrets of their own, and who knows that the secret sin of more than one of them was not the very sin which caused you so much misery?"

"Dost thou then imagine," said Peter, "the sin against the Holy Ghost to be so common an occurrence?"

"As you have described it," said I, "of very common occurrence, especially amongst children, who are, indeed, the only beings likely to commit it."

"Truly," said Winifred, "the young man talks wisely."

Peter was silent for some moments, and appeared to be reflecting; at last, suddenly raising his head, he looked me full in the face, and, grasping my hand with vehemence, he said, "Tell me, young man, only one thing, hast thou, too, committed the sin against the Holy Ghost?"

"I am neither Papist, nor Methodist," said I, "but of the Church, and, being so, confess myself to no one, but keep my own counsel; I will tell thee, however, had I committed, at the same age, twenty such sins as that which you committed, I should feel no uneasiness at these years—but I am sleepy, and must go to rest."

"God bless thee, young man," said Winifred.

CHAPTER XI.

LOW AND CALM. —MUCH BETTER.—BLESSED EFFECT.—NO ANSWER.—SUCH A SERMON.

BEFORE I sank to rest I heard Winifred and her husband conversing in the place where I had left them; both their voices were low and calm. I soon fell asleep, and slumbered for some time. On my awakening I again heard them conversing, but they were now in their cart; still the voices of both were calm. I heard no passionate bursts of wild despair on the part of the man. Methought I occasionally heard the word Pechod proceeding from the lips of each, but with no particular emphasis. I supposed they were talking of the innate sin of both their hearts.

"I wish that man were happy," said I to myself, "were it only for his wife's sake, and yet he deserves to be happy for his own."

The next day Peter was very cheerful, more cheerful than I had ever seen him. At breakfast his conversation was animated, and he smiled repeatedly. I looked at him with the greatest interest, and the eyes of his wife were almost constantly fixed upon him. A shade of gloom would occasionally come over his countenance, but it almost instantly disappeared; perhaps it proceeded more from habit than anything else. After breakfast he took his Welsh Bible and sat down beneath a tree. His eyes were soon fixed intently on the volume; now and then he would call his wife, show her some passage, and appeared to consult with her. The day passed quickly and comfortably.

"Your husband seems much better," said I, at evening fall, to Winifred, as we chanced to be alone.

"He does," said Winifred; "and that on the day of the week when he was wont to appear most melancholy, for to-morrow is the Sabbath. He now no longer looks forward to the Sabbath with dread, but appears to reckon on it. What a happy change! and to think that this change should have been produced by a few words, seem-

ingly careless ones, proceeding from the mouth of one who is almost a stranger to him. Truly, it is wonderful."

"To whom do you allude," said I; "and to what words?"

"To yourself, and to the words which came from your lips last night, after you had heard my poor husband's history. Those strange words, drawn out with so much seeming indifference, have produced in my husband the blessed effect which you have observed. They have altered the current of his ideas. He no longer thinks himself the only being in the world doomed to destruction,—the only being capable of committing the never-to-be-forgiven sin. Your supposition that that which harrowed his soul is of frequent occurrence amongst children, has tranquillized him; the mist which hung over his mind has cleared away, and he begins to see the groundlessness of his apprehensions. The Lord has permitted him to be chastened for a season, but his lamp will only burn the brighter for what he has undergone."

Sunday came, fine and glorious as the last. Again my friends and myself breakfasted together

—again the good family of the house on the hill above, headed by the respectable master, descended to the meadow. Peter and his wife were ready to receive them. Again Peter placed himself at the side of the honest farmer, and Winifred by the side of her friend. "Wilt thou not come?" said Peter, looking towards me with a face in which there was much emotion. "Wilt thou not come?" said Winifred, with a face beaming with kindness. But I made no answer, and presently the party moved away, in the same manner in which it had moved on the preceding Sabbath, and I was again left alone.

The hours of the Sabbath passed slowly away. I sat gazing at the sky, the trees, and the water. At last I strolled up to the house and sat down in the porch. It was empty; there was no modest maiden there, as on the preceding Sabbath. The damsel of the book had accompanied the rest. I had seen her in the procession, and the house appeared quite deserted. The owners had probably left it to my custody, so I sat down in the porch, quite alone. The hours of the Sabbath passed heavily away.

At last evening came, and with it the party of the morning. I was now at my place beneath the oak. I went forward to meet them. Peter and his wife received me with a calm and quiet greeting, and passed forward. The rest of the party had broke into groups. There was a kind of excitement amongst them, and much eager whispering. I went to one of the groups; the young girl of whom I have spoken more than once, was speaking: "Such a sermon," said she, "it has never been our lot to hear; Peter never before spoke as he has done this day—he was always a powerful preacher, but oh, the unction of the discourse of this morning, and yet more of that of the afternoon, which was the continuation of it!" "What was the subject?" said I, interrupting her. "Ah! you should have been there, young man, to have heard it; it would have made a lasting impression upon you. I was bathed in tears all the time; those who heard it will never forget the preaching of the good Peter Williams on the Power, Providence, and Goodness of God."

CHAPTER XII.

DEEP INTEREST.—GOODLY COUNTRY.—TWO MANSIONS.—WELSHMAN'S CANDLE.—BEAUTIFUL UNIVERSE.—GODLY DISCOURSE.—FINE CHURCH.—POINTS OF DOCTRINE.—STRANGE ADVENTURES.—PALTRY CAUSE.—ROMAN PONTIFF.—EVIL SPIRIT.

On the morrow I said to my friends, "I am about to depart; farewell!" "Depart!" said Peter and his wife, simultaneously, "whither wouldst thou go?" "I can't stay here all my days," I replied. "Of course not," said Peter; "but we had no idea of losing thee so soon: we had almost hoped that thou wouldst join us, become one of us. We are under infinite obligations to thee." "You mean I am under infinite obligations to you," said I. "Did you not save my life?" "Perhaps so, under God," said Peter; "and what hast thou not done for me? Art thou aware that, under God, thou hast preserved my soul from despair? But, independent of that, we like thy company, and feel a deep interest in thee, and would fain teach thee the way that is

right. Hearken, to-morrow we go into Wales; go with us." "I have no wish to go into Wales," said I. "Why not?" said Peter, with animation. "Wales is a goodly country; as the Scripture says—a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths, that spring out of valleys and hills, a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig *lead*."

"I dare say it is a very fine country," said I, "but I have no wish to go there just now; my destiny seems to point in another direction, to say nothing of my trade." "Thou dost right to say nothing of thy trade," said Peter, smiling, "for thou seemest to care nothing about it; which has led Winifred and myself to suspect that thou art not altogether what thou seemest; but, setting that aside, we should be most happy if thou wouldst go with us into Wales." "I cannot promise to go with you into Wales," said I; "but, as you depart to-morrow, I will stay with you through the day, and on the morrow accompany you part of the way." "Do," said Peter: "I have many people to see to-day, and so has Winifred; but we will both endeavour to have some serious dis-

course with thee, which, perhaps, will turn to thy profit in the end."

In the course of the day the good Peter came to me, as I was seated beneath the oak, and, placing himself by me, commenced addressing me in the following manner:—

"I have no doubt, my young friend, that you are willing to admit, that the most important thing which a human being possesses is his soul; it is of infinitely more importance than the body, which is a frail substance, and cannot last for many years; but not so the soul, which, by its nature, is imperishable. To one of two mansions the soul is destined to depart, after its separation from the body, to heaven or hell; to the halls of eternal bliss, where God and his holy angels dwell, or to the place of endless misery, inhabited by Satan and his grisly companions. My friend, if the joys of heaven are great, unutterably great, so are the torments of hell unutterably so. I wish not to speak of them, I wish not to terrify your imagination with the torments of hell: indeed, I like not to think of them; but it is necessary to speak of them sometimes, and to think of them some-

times, lest you should sink into a state of carnal security. Authors, friend, and learned men, are not altogether agreed as to the particulars of hell. They all agree, however, in considering it a place of exceeding horror. Master Ellis Wyn, who by the by was a churchman, calls it, amongst other things, a place of strong sighs, and of flaming sparks. Master Rees Pritchard, who was not only a churchman, but Vicar of Llandovery, and flourished about two hundred years ago—I wish many like him flourished now—speaking of hell, in his collection of sweet hymns, called the 'Welshman's Candle,' observes,

"'The pool is continually blazing; it is very deep, without any known bottom, and the walls are so high, that there is neither hope nor possibility of escaping over them.'

"But, as I told you just now, I have no great pleasure in talking of hell. No, friend, no; I would sooner talk of the other place, and of the goodness and hospitality of God amongst his saints above."

And then the excellent man began to dilate upon the joys of heaven, and the goodness and hospitality

of God in the mansions above; explaining to me, in the clearest way, how I might get there.

And when he had finished what he had to say, he left me, whereupon Winifred drew nigh, and sitting down by me, began to address me. "I do not think," said she, "from what I have observed of thee, that thou wouldst wish to be ungrateful, and yet, is not thy whole life a series of ingratitude, and to whom?—to thy Maker. Has he not endowed thee with a goodly and healthy form; and senses which enable thee to enjoy the delights of his beautiful universe—the work of his hands? Canst thou not enjoy, even to rapture, the brightness of the sun, the perfume of the meads, and the song of the dear birds, which inhabit among the trees? Yes, thou canst; for I have seen thee, and observed thee doing so. Yet, during the whole time that I have known thee, I have not heard proceed from thy lips one single word of praise or thanksgiving to . . . . ."

And in this manner the admirable woman proceeded for a considerable time, and to all her discourse I listened with attention; and when she

had concluded, I took her hand and said, "I thank you," and that was all.

On the next day everything was ready for our departure. The good family of the house came to bid us farewell. There were shaking of hands, and kisses, as on the night of our arrival.

And as I stood somewhat apart, the young girl of whom I have spoken so often, came up to me, and holding out her hand, said, "Farewell, young man, wherever thou goest." Then, after looking around her, she said, "It was all true you told me. Yesterday I received a letter from him thou wottest of, he is coming soon. God bless you, young man; who would have thought thou knewest so much!"

So, after we had taken our farewell of the good family, we departed, proceeding in the direction of Wales. Peter was very cheerful, and enlivened the way with godly discourse and spiritual hymns, some of which were in the Welsh language. At length I said, "It is a pity that you did not continue in the church; you have a turn for Psalmody,

and I have heard of a man becoming a bishop by means of a less qualification."

"Very probably," said Peter; "more the pity. But I have told you the reason of my forsaking it. Frequently, when I went to the church door, I found it barred, and the priest absent; what was I to do? My heart was bursting for want of some religious help and comfort; what could I do? as good Master Rees Pritchard observes in his 'Candle for Welshmen,'

"'It is a doleful thing to see little children burning on the hot coals for want of help; but yet more doleful to see a flock of souls falling into the burning lake for want of a priest.'"

"The Church of England is a fine church," said I; "I would not advise any one to speak ill of the Church of England before me."

"I have nothing to say against the church," said Peter; all I wish is that it would fling itself a little more open, and that its priests would a little more bestir themselves; in a word, that it would shoulder the cross and become a missionary church."

"It is too proud for that," said Winifred.

"You are much more of a Methodist," said I, "than your husband. But tell me," said I, addressing myself to Peter, "do you not differ from the church in some points of doctrine? I, of course, as a true member of the church, am quite ignorant of the peculiar opinions of wandering sectaries?"

"Oh, the pride of that church!" said Winifred, half to herself; "wandering sectaries!"

"We differ in no points of doctrine," said Peter; "we believe all the church believes, though we are not so fond of vain and superfluous ceremonies, snow-white neckcloths and surplices, as the church is. We likewise think that there is no harm in a sermon by the road-side, or in holding free discourse with a beggar beneath a hedge, or a tinker," he added, smiling; "it was those superfluous ceremonies, those surplices and white neckcloths, and, above all, the necessity of strictly regulating his words and conversation, which drove John Wesley out of the church, and sent him wandering up and down as you see me, poor Welsh Peter, do."

Nothing farther passed for some time; we were now drawing near the hills: at last I said, "You

must have met with a great many strange adventures since you took up this course of life?"

"Many," said Peter, "it has been my lot to meet with; but none more strange than one which occurred to me only a few weeks ago. You were asking me, not long since, whether I believed in devils? Ay, truly young man; and I believe that the abyss and the yet deeper unknown do not contain them all; some walk about upon the green earth. So it happened, some weeks ago, that I was exercising my ministry about forty miles from here. I was alone, Winifred being slightly indisposed, staying for a few days at the house of an acquaintance; I had finished afternoon's worship—the people had dispersed, and I was sitting solitary by my cart under some green trees in a quiet retired place; suddenly a voice said to me, 'Good evening, Pastor;' I looked up, and before me stood a man, at least the appearance of a man, dressed in a black suit of rather a singular fashion. He was about my own age, or somewhat older. As I looked upon him, it appeared to me that I had seen him twice before whilst preaching. I replied to his salutation, and perceiving that he looked some-

what fatigued, I took out a stool from the cart, and asked him to sit down. We began to discourse; I at first supposed that he might be one of ourselves, some wandering minister; but I was soon undeceived. Neither his language nor his ideas were those of any one of our body. He spoke on all kinds of matters with much fluency; till at last he mentioned my preaching, complimenting me on my powers. I replied, as well I might, that I could claim no merit of my own, and that if I spoke with any effect, it was only by the grace of God. As I uttered these last words, a horrible kind of sneer came over his countenance, which made me shudder, for there was something diabolical in it. I said little more, but listened attentively to his discourse. At last he said that I was engaged in a paltry cause, quite unworthy of one of my powers. 'How can that be,' said I, 'even if I possessed all the powers in the world, seeing that I am engaged in the cause of our Lord Jesus?'

"The same kind of sneer again came on his countenance, but he almost instantly observed, that if I chose to forsake this same miserable cause,

from which nothing but contempt and privation was to be expected, he would enlist me into another, from which I might expect both profit and renown. An idea now came into my head, and I told him firmly, that if he wished me to forsake my present profession and become a member of the Church of England, I must absolutely decline; that I had no ill-will against that church, but I thought I could do most good in my present position, which I would not forsake to be Archbishop of Canterbury. Thereupon he burst into a strange laughter, and went away, repeating to himself, 'Church of England! Archbishop of Canterbury!' A few days after, when I was once more in a solitary place, he again appeared before me, and asked me whether I had thought over his words, and whether I was willing to enlist under the banners of his master, adding, that he was eager to secure me, as he conceived that I might be highly useful to the cause. I then asked him who his master was; he hesitated for a moment, and then answered, 'The Roman Pontiff.' 'If it be he,' said I, 'I can have nothing to do with him, I will serve no one who is an enemy of Christ.' Thereupon he drew near to

me, and told me not to talk so much like a simpleton; that as for Christ, it was probable that no such person ever existed, but that if he ever did, he was the greatest impostor the world ever saw. How long he continued in this way I know not, for I now considered that an evil spirit was before me, and shrank within myself, shivering in every limb; when I recovered myself and looked about me, he was gone. Two days after, he again stood before me, in the same place, and about the same hour, renewing his propositions, and speaking more horribly than before. I made him no answer; whereupon he continued; but suddenly hearing a noise behind him, he looked round and beheld Winifred, who had returned to me on the morning of that day. 'Who are you?' said he, fiercely. 'This man's wife,' said she, calmly fixing her eyes upon him. 'Begone from him, unhappy one, thou temptest him in vain.' He made no answer, but stood as if transfixed: at length recovering himself, he departed, muttering 'Wife! wife! If the fool has a wife, he will never do for us.'"

CHAPTER XIII.

THE BORDER.—THANK YOU BOTH.—PIPE AND FIDDLE.—TALIESIN.

We were now drawing very near the hills, and Peter said, "If you are to go into Wales, you must presently decide, for we are close upon the border."

"Which is the border?" said I.

"Yon small brook," said Peter, "into which the man on horseback who is coming towards us, is now entering."

"I see it," said I, "and the man; he stops in the middle of it, as if to water his steed."

We proceeded till we had nearly reached the brook. "Well," said Peter, "will you go into Wales?"

"What should I do in Wales?" I demanded.

"Do!" said Peter, smiling, "learn Welsh."

I stopped my little pony. "Then I need not go into Wales; I already know Welsh."

"Know Welsh!" said Peter, staring at me.

"Know Welsh!" said Winifred, stopping her cart.

"How and when did you learn it?" said Peter.

"From books, in my boyhood."

"Read Welsh!" said Peter; "is it possible?"

"Read Welsh!" said Winifred; "is it possible?"

"Well, I hope you will come with us," said Peter.

"Come with us, young man," said Winifred; "let me, on the other side of the brook, welcome you into Wales."

"Thank you both," said I, "but I will not come."

"Wherefore?" exclaimed both, simultaneously.

"Because it is neither fit nor proper that I cross into Wales at this time, and in this manner. When I go into Wales, I should wish to go in a new suit of superfine black, with hat and beaver, mounted on a powerful steed, black and glossy, like that which bore Greduv to the fight of Catraeth. I should wish, moreover, to see the Welshmen assembled on the border ready to welcome me

with pipe and fiddle, and much whooping and shouting, and to attend me to Wrexham, or even as far as Machynllaith, where I should wish to be invited to a dinner at which all the bards should be present, and to be seated at the right hand of the president, who, when the cloth was removed, should arise, and, amidst cries of silence, exclaim—'Brethren and Welshmen, allow me to propose the health of my most respectable friend the translator of the odes of the great Ab Gwilym, the pride and glory of Wales.'"

"How!" said Peter, "hast thou translated the works of the mighty Dafydd?"

"With notes critical, historical, and explanatory."

"Come with us, friend," said Peter. "I cannot promise such a dinner as thou wishest, but neither pipe nor fiddle shall be wanting."

"Come with us, young man," said Winifred, "even as thou art, and the daughters of Wales shall bid thee welcome."

"I will not go with you," said I. "Dost thou see that man in the ford?"

"Who is staring at us so, and whose horse has not yet done drinking? Of course I see him."

"I shall turn back with him. God bless you."

"Go back with him not," said Peter; "he is one of those whom I like not, one of the clibberty-clabber, as Master Ellis Wyn observes—turn not with that man."

"Go not back with him," said Winifred. "If thou goest with that man, thou wilt soon forget all our profitable counsels; come with us."

"I cannot; I have much to say to him. Kosko Divvus, Mr. Petulengro."

"Kosko Divvus, Pal," said Mr. Petulengro, riding through the water; "are you turning back?"

I turned back with Mr. Petulengro.

Peter came running after me: "One moment, young man,—who and what are you?"

"I must answer in the words of Taliesin," said I; "none can say with positiveness whether I be fish or flesh, least of all myself. God bless you both!"

"Take this," said Peter, and he thrust his Welsh Bible into my hand.

CHAPTER XIV.

AT A FUNERAL.—TWO DAYS AGO.—VERY COOLLY.— ROMAN WOMAN.—WELL AND HEARTY. — SOMEWHAT DREARY.—PLUM PUDDING. — ROMAN FASHION.—QUITE DIFFERENT.—THE DARK LANE.—BEYOND THE TIME. — FINE FELLOW. — SUCH A STRUGGLE. — LIKE A WILD CAT.—FAIR PLAY.—PLEASANT ENOUGH SPOT.—NO GLOVES.

So I turned back with Mr. Petulengro. We travelled for some time in silence; at last we fell into discourse. "You have been in Wales, Mr. Petulengro?"

"Ay, truly, brother."

"What have you been doing there?"

"Assisting at a funeral."

"At whose funeral?"

"Mrs. Hearne's, brother."

"Is she dead, then?"

"As a nail, brother."

"How did she die?"

"By hanging, brother."

"I am lost in astonishment," said I; whereupon Mr. Petulengro, lifting his sinister leg over the neck of his steed, and adjusting himself sideways

in the saddle, replied, with great deliberation, "Two days ago, I happened to be at a fair not very far from here; I was all alone by myself, for our party were upwards of forty miles off, when who should come up but a chap that I knew, a relation, or rather, a connection of mine—one of those Hearnes. 'Ar'n't you going to the funeral?' said he; and then, brother, there passed between him and me, in the way of questioning and answering, much the same as has just now passed between I and you; but when he mentioned hanging, I thought I could do no less than ask who hanged her, which you forgot to do. 'Who hanged her?' said I; and then the man told me that she had done it herself; been her own hinjiri; and then I thought to myself what a sin and shame it would be if I did not go to the funeral, seeing that she was my own mother-in-law. I would have brought my wife, and, indeed, the whole of our party, but there was no time for that; they were too far off, and the dead was to be buried early the next morning; so I went with the man, and he led me into Wales, where his party had lately retired, and when there, through many wild and desolate places to their encamp-

ment, and there I found the Hearnes, and the dead body—the last laid out on a mattress, in a tent, dressed Romaneskoenæs in a red cloak, and big bonnet of black beaver. I must say for the Hearnes that they took the matter very coolly; some were eating, others drinking, and some were talking about their small affairs; there was one, however, who did not take the matter so coolly, but took on enough for the whole family, sitting beside the dead woman, tearing her hair, and refusing to take either meat or drink; it was the child Leonora. I arrived at night-fall, and the burying was not to take place till the morning, which I was rather sorry for, as I am not very fond of them Hearnes, who are not very fond of anybody. They never asked me to eat or drink, notwithstanding I had married into the family; one of them, however, came up and offered to fight me for five shillings; had it not been for them I should have come back as empty as I went—he didn't stand up five minutes. Brother, I passed the night as well as I could, beneath a tree, for the tents were full, and not over clean; I slept little, and had my eyes about me, for I knew the kind of people I was among.

"Early in the morning the funeral took place. The body was placed not in a coffin but on a bier, and carried not to a churchyard but to a deep dell close by; and there it was buried beneath a rock, dressed just as I have told you; and this was done by the bidding of Leonora, who had heard her bebee say that she wished to be buried, not in gorgeous fashion, but like a Roman woman of the old blood, the kosko puro rati, brother. When it was over, and we had got back to the encampment, I prepared to be going. Before mounting my gry. however, I bethought me to ask what could have induced the dead woman to make away with herself—a thing so uncommon amongst Romanies; whereupon one squinted with his eyes, a second spirted saliver into the air, and a third said that he neither knew nor cared; she was a good riddance, having more than once been nearly the ruin of them all, from the quantity of brimstone she carried about her. One, however, I suppose rather ashamed of the way in which they had treated me, said at last, that if I wanted to know all about the matter, none could tell me better than the child, who was in all her secrets, and was not a little like her; so I looked about for

the child, but could find her nowhere. At last the same man told me that he shouldn't wonder if I found her at the grave; so I went back to the grave, and sure enough there I found the child Leonora, seated on the ground above the body, crying and taking on; so I spoke kindly to her, and said, 'How came all this, Leonora? tell me all about it.' It was a long time before I could get any answer; at last she opened her mouth and spoke, and these were the words she said, 'It was all along of your Pal;' and then she told me all about the matter—how Mrs. Hearne could not abide you, which I knew before; and that she had sworn your destruction, which I did not know before. And then she told me how she found you living in the wood by yourself, and how you were enticed to eat a poisoned cake; and she told me many other things that you wot of, and she told me what perhaps you don't wot, namely, that finding you had been removed, she, the child, had tracked you a long way, and found you at last well and hearty, and no ways affected by the poison, and heard you, as she stood concealed, disputing about religion with a Welsh Methody. Well, brother, she

told me all this; and, moreover, that when Mrs. Hearne heard of it, she said that a dream of hers had come to pass. I don't know what it was, but something about herself, a tinker, and a dean; and then she added, that it was all up with her, and that she must take a long journey. Well, brother, that same night Leonora, waking from her sleep in the tent where Mrs. Hearne and she were wont to sleep, missed her bebee, and, becoming alarmed, went in search of her, and at last found her hanging from a branch; and when the child had got so far, she took on violently, and I could not get another word from her; so I left her, and here I am."

"And I am glad to see you, Mr. Petulengro; but this is sad news which you tell me about Mrs. Hearne."

"Somewhat dreary, brother; yet, perhaps, after all, it is a good thing that she is removed; she carried so much Devil's tinder about with her, as the man said."

"I am sorry for her," said I; "more especially as I am the cause of her death—though the innocent one."

"She could not bide you, brother, that's cer-

tain; but that is no reason"—said Mr. Petulengro, balancing himself upon the saddle—"that is no reason why she should prepare drow to take away your essence of life; and, when disappointed, to hang herself upon a tree: if she was dissatisfied with you, she might have flown at you, and scratched your face; or, if she did not judge herself your match, she might have put down five shillings for a turn up between you and some one she thought could beat you—myself, for example, and so the matter might have ended comfortably; but she was always too fond of covert ways, drows, and brimstones. This is not the first poisoning affair she has been engaged in."

"You allude to drabbing bawlor."

"Bah!" said Mr. Petulengro; "there's no harm in that. No, no! she has cast drows in her time for other guess things than bawlor; both Gorgios and Romans have tasted of them, and died. Did you never hear of the poisoned plum pudding?"

"Never."

"Then I will tell you about it. It happened about six years ago, a few months after she had quitted us—she had gone first amongst her own

people, as she called them; but there was another small party of Romans, with whom she soon became very intimate. It so happened that this small party got into trouble; whether it was about a horse or an ass, or passing bad money, no matter to you and me, who had no hand in the business; three or four of them were taken and lodged in . . . . Castle, and amongst them was a woman; but the sherengro, or principal man of the party, and who it seems had most hand in the affair, was still at large. All of a sudden a rumour was spread abroad that the woman was about to play false, and to 'peach the rest. Said the principal man, when he heard it, 'If she does, I am nashkado.' Mrs. Hearne was then on a visit to the party, and when she heard the principal man take on so, she said, 'But I suppose you know what to do?' 'I do not,' said he. 'Then hir mi devlis,' said she, 'you are a fool. But leave the matter to me, I know how to dispose of her in Roman fashion.' Why she wanted to interfere in the matter, brother, I don't know, unless it was from pure brimstoneness of disposition—she had no hand in the matter which had brought the party

into trouble—she was only on a visit, and it had happened before she came; but she was always ready to give dangerous advice. Well, brother, the principal man listened to what she had to say, and let her do what she would; and she made a pudding, a very nice one, no doubt—for, besides plums, she put in drows and all the Roman condiments that she knew of; and she gave it to the principal man, and the principal put it into a basket and directed it to the woman in . . . . Castle, and the woman in the castle took it and . . . ."

"Ate of it," said I; "just like my case!"

"Quite different, brother; she took it, it is true, but instead of giving way to her appetite, as you might have done, she put it before the rest whom she was going to impeach; perhaps she wished to see how they liked it before she tasted it herself; and all the rest were poisoned, and one died, and there was a precious outcry, and the woman cried loudest of all; and she said, 'It was my death was sought for; I know the man, and I'll be revenged.' And then the Poknees spoke to her and said, 'Where can we find him?' and she said, 'I am awake to his motions; three weeks from hence, the

night before the full moon, at such and such an hour, he will pass down such a lane with such a man.'"

"Well," said I, "and what did the Poknees do?"

"Do, brother! sent for a plastramengro from Bow Street, quite secretly, and told him what the woman had said; and the night before the full moon, the plastramengro went to the place which the juwa had pointed out, all alone, brother; and in order that he might not be too late, he went two hours before his time. I know the place well, brother, where the plastramengro placed himself behind a thick holly tree, at the end of a lane, where a gate leads into various fields, through which there is a path for carts and horses. The lane is called the dark lane by the Gorgios, being much shaded by trees. So the plastramengro placed himself in the dark lane behind the holly tree; it was a cold February night, dreary though; the wind blew in gusts, and the moon had not yet risen, and the plastramengro waited behind the tree till he was tired, and thought he might as well sit down; so he sat down, and was not long in falling to sleep, and there he slept for some hours; and when he awoke the moon had

risen, and was shining bright, so that there was a kind of moonlight even in the dark lane; and the plastramengro pulled out his watch, and contrived to make out that it was just two hours beyond the time when the men should have passed by. Brother, I do not know what the plastramengro thought of himself, but I know, brother, what I should have thought of myself in his situation. I should have thought, brother, that I was a drowsy scoppelo, and that I had let the fellow pass by whilst I was sleeping behind a bush. As it turned out, however, his going to sleep did no harm, but quite the contrary: just as he was going away, he heard a gate slam in the direction of the fields, and then he heard the low stumping of horses, as if on soft ground, for the path in those fields is generally soft, and at that time it had been lately ploughed up. Well, brother, presently he saw two men on horseback coming towards the lane through the field behind the gate; the man who rode foremost was a tall big fellow, the very man he was in quest of; the other was a smaller chap, not so small either, but a light, wiry fellow, and a proper master of his hands when he sees occasion for using them.

Well, brother, the foremost man came to the gate, reached at the hank, undid it, and rode through, holding it open for the other. Before, however, the other could follow into the lane, out bolted the plastramengro from behind the tree, kicked the gate to with his foot, and, seizing the big man on horseback, 'You are my prisoner,' said he. I am of opinion, brother, that the plastramengro, notwithstanding he went to sleep, must have been a regular fine fellow."

"I am entirely of your opinion," said I, "but what happened then?"

"Why, brother, the Rommany chal, after he had somewhat recovered from his surprise, for it is rather uncomfortable to be laid hold of at nighttime, and told you are a prisoner; more especially when you happen to have two or three things on your mind which, if proved against you, would carry you to the nashky. The Rommany chal, I say, clubbed his whip, and aimed a blow at the plastramengro, which, if it had hit him on the skull, as was intended, would very likely have cracked it. The plastramengro, however, received it partly on his staff, so that it did him no particular

damage. Whereupon, seeing what kind of customer he had to deal with, he dropped his staff and seized the chal with both his hands, who forthwith spurred his horse, hoping, by doing so, either to break away from him, or fling him down; but it would not do—the plastramengro held on like a bull-dog, so that the Rommany chal, to escape being hauled to the ground, suddenly flung himself off the saddle, and then happened in that lane, close by the gate, such a struggle between those two—the chal and the runner—as I suppose will never happen again. But you must have heard of it; every one has heard of it; every one has heard of the fight between the Bow Street engro and the Rommany chal."

"I never heard of it till now."

"All England rung of it, brother. There never was a better match than between those two. The runner was somewhat the stronger of the two—all these engroes are strong fellows—and a great deal cooler, for all of that sort are wondrous cool people—he had, however, to do with one who knew full well how to take his own part. The chal fought the engro brother in the old Roman fashion. He

bit, he kicked, and screamed like a wild cat of Benygant; casting foam from his mouth, and fire from his eyes. Sometimes he was beneath the engro's legs, and sometimes he was upon his shoulders. What the engro found the most difficult, was to get a firm hold of the chal, for no sooner did he seize the chal by any part of his wearing apparel, than the chal either tore himself away, or contrived to slip out of it; so that in a little time the chal was three parts naked; and as for holding him by the body, it was out of the question, for he was as slippery as an eel. At last the engro seized the chal by the Belcher's handkerchief, which he wore in a knot round his neck, and do whatever the chal could, he could not free himself; and when the engro saw that, it gave him fresh heart, no doubt: 'It 's of no use,' said he; 'you had better give in; hold out your hands for the darbies, or I will throttle you.'"

"And what did the other fellow do, who came with the chal?" said I.

"I sat still on my horse, brother."

"You!" said I. "Were you the man?"

"I was he, brother."

"And why did you not help your comrade?"

"I have fought in the ring, brother."

"And what had fighting in the ring to do with fighting in the lane?"

"You mean not fighting. A great deal, brother; it taught me to prize fair play. When I fought Staffordshire Dick, t'other side of London, I was alone, brother. Not a Rommany chal to back me, and he had all his brother pals about him; but they gave me fair play, brother; and I beat Staffordshire Dick, which I couldn't have done had they put one finger on his side the scale; for he was as good a man as myself, or nearly so. Now, brother, had I but bent a finger in favour of the Rommany chal, the plastramengro would never have come alive out of the lane; but I did not, for I thought to myself fair play is a precious stone; so you see, brother—"

"That you are quite right, Mr. Petulengro, I see that clearly; and now, pray proceed with your narration; it is both moral and entertaining."

But Mr. Petulengro did not proceed with his narration, neither did he proceed upon his way; he had stopped his horse, and his eyes were intently

fixed on a broad strip of grass beneath some lofty trees, on the left side of the road. It was a pleasant enough spot, and seemed to invite wayfaring people, such as we were, to rest from the fatigues of the road, and the heat and vehemence of the sun. After examining it for a considerable time, Mr. Petulengro said, "I say, brother, that would be a nice place for a tussle!"

"I dare say it would," said I, "if two people were inclined to fight."

"The ground is smooth," said Mr. Petulengro; "without holes or ruts, and the trees cast much shade. I don't think, brother, that we could find a better place," said Mr. Petulengro, springing from his horse.

"But you and I don't want to fight!"

"Speak for yourself, brother," said Mr. Petulengro. "However, I will tell you how the matter stands. There is a point at present between us. There can be no doubt that you are the cause of Mrs. Hearne's death, innocently, you will say, but still the cause. Now, I shouldn't like it to be known that I went up and down the country with a pal who was the cause of my mother-in-law's death, that's to say, unless he

gave me satisfaction. Now, if I and my pal have a tussle, he gives me satisfaction; and, if he knocks my eyes out, which I know you can't do, it makes no difference at all, he gives me satisfaction; and he who says to the contrary, knows nothing of gypsy law, and is a dinelo into the bargain."

"But we have no gloves!"

"Gloves!" said Mr. Petulengro, contemptuously, "gloves! I tell you what, brother, I always thought you were a better hand at the gloves than the naked fist; and, to tell you the truth, besides taking satisfaction for Mrs. Hearne's death, I wish to see what you can do with your mawleys; so now is your time, brother, and this is your place, grass and shade, no ruts or holes; come on, brother, or I shall think you what I should not like to call you."

CHAPTER XV.

OFFENCE AND DEFENCE.—I 'M SATISFIED. — FOND OF SOLITUDE.— POSSESSION OF PROPERTY.—CHAL DEVLEHI.—WINDING PATH.

And when I heard Mr. Petulengro talk in this manner, which I had never heard him do before, and which I can only account for by his being fasting and ill-tempered, I had of course no other alternative than to accept his challenge; so I put myself into a posture which I deemed the best both for offence and defence, and the tussle commenced; and when it had endured for about half an hour, Mr. Petulengro said, "Brother, there is much blood on your face; you had better wipe it off;" and when I had wiped it off, and again resumed my former attitude, Mr. Petulengro said, "I think enough has been done, brother, in the affair of the old woman; I have, moreover, tried what you are able to do, and find you, as I thought, less apt with the naked

mawleys than the stuffed gloves; nay, brother, put your hands down, I 'm satisfied; blood has been shed, which is all that can be reasonably expected for an old woman who carried so much brimstone about her as Mrs. Hearne."

So the struggle ended, and we resumed our route, Mr. Petulengro sitting sideways upon his horse as before, and I driving my little pony-cart, and when we had proceeded about three miles, we came to a small public house, which bore the sign of the Silent Woman, where we stopped to refresh our cattle and ourselves; and as we sat over our bread and ale, it came to pass that Mr. Petulengro asked me various questions, and amongst others, how I intended to dispose of myself; I told him that I did not know; whereupon, with considerable frankness, he invited me to his camp, and told me that if I chose to settle down amongst them, and become a Rommany chal, I should have his wife's sister Ursula, who was still unmarried, and occasionally talked of me.

I declined his offer, assigning as a reason the recent death of Mrs. Hearne, of which I was the cause, although innocent. "A pretty life I should

lead with those two," said I, "when they came to know it." "Pooh," said Mr. Petulengro, "they will never know it. I shan't blab, and as for Leonora, that girl has a head on her shoulders." "Unlike the woman in the sign," said I, "whose head is cut off. You speak nonsense, Mr. Petulengro; as long as a woman has a head on her shoulders she'll talk,—but, leaving women out of the case, it is impossible to keep anything a secret; an old master of mine told me so long ago. I have moreover another reason for declining your offer. I am at present not disposed for society. I am become fond of solitude. I wish I could find some quiet place to which I could retire to hold communion with my own thoughts, and practise, if I thought fit, either of my trades." "What trades?" said Mr. Petulengro. "Why, the one which I have lately been engaged in, or my original one, which I confess I should like better, that of a kaulomescro." "Ah, I have frequently heard you talk of making horse-shoes," said Mr. Petulengro; "I, however, never saw you make one, and no one else that I am aware; I don't believe—come brother, don't be angry, it's quite possible that you may have done

things which neither I nor any one else has seen you do, and that such things may some day or other come to light, as you say nothing can be kept secret. Be that, however, as it may, pay the reckoning and let us be going, I think I can advise you to just such a kind of place as you seem to want."

"And how do you know that I have got wherewithal to pay the reckoning?" I demanded. "Brother," said Mr. Petulengro, "I was just now looking in your face, which exhibited the very look of a person conscious of the possession of property; there was nothing hungry or sneaking in it. Pay the reckoning, brother."

And when we were once more upon the road, Mr. Petulengro began to talk of the place which he conceived would serve me as a retreat under present circumstances. "I tell you frankly, brother, that it is a queer kind of place, and I am not very fond of pitching my tent in it, it is so surprisingly dreary. It is a deep dingle in the midst of a large field, on an estate about which there has been a lawsuit for some years past. I dare say you will be quiet enough, for the nearest town is five miles

distant, and there are only a few huts and hedge public-houses in the neighbourhood. Brother, I am fond of solitude myself, but not that kind of solitude; I like a quiet heath, where I can pitch my house, but I always like to have a gay stirring place not far off, where the women can pen dukkerin, and I myself can sell or buy a horse, if needful—such a place as the Chong Gav. I never feel so merry as when there, brother, or on the heath above it, where I taught you Rommany."

Shortly after this discourse we reached a milestone, and a few yards from the milestone, on the left hand, was a cross-road. Thereupon Mr. Petulengro said, "Brother, my path lies to the left; if you choose to go with me to my camp, good; if not, Chal Devlehi." But I again refused Mr. Petulengro's invitation, and, shaking him by the hand, proceeded forward alone; and about ten miles farther on I reached the town of which he had spoken, and, following certain directions which he had given, discovered, though not without some difficulty, the dingle which he had mentioned. It was a deep hollow in the midst of a wide field; the shelving sides were overgrown with trees and bushes, a belt of sal-

lows surrounded it on the top, a steep winding path led down into the depths, practicable, however, for a light cart, like mine; at the bottom was an open space, and there I pitched my tent, and there I contrived to put up my forge. "I will here ply the trade of kaulomescro," said I.

CHAPTER XVI.

HIGHLY POETICAL.— VOLUNDR.— GRECIAN MYTHOLOGY.— MAKING A PETUL.—TONGUES OF FLAME.—HAMMERING.—SPITE OF DUKKERIN.— HEAVINESS.

It has always struck me that there is something highly poetical about a forge. I am not singular in this opinion: various individuals have assured me that they can never pass by one, even in the midst of a crowded town, without experiencing sensations which they can scarcely define, but which are highly pleasurable. I have a decided penchant for forges, especially rural ones, placed in some quaint quiet spot—a dingle, for example, which is a poetical place, or at a meeting of four roads, which is still more so; for how many a superstition—and superstition is the soul of poetry—is connected with these cross roads! I love to light upon such a one, especially after nightfall, as everything about a forge tells to most advantage at night; the hammer

sounds more solemnly in the stillness; the glowing particles scattered by the strokes sparkle with more effect in the darkness, whilst the sooty visage of the sastramescro, half in shadow, and half illumed by the red and partial blaze of the forge, looks more mysterious and strange. On such occasions I draw in my horse's rein, and, seated in the saddle, endeavour to associate with the picture before me—in itself a picture of romance—whatever of the wild and wonderful I have read of in books, or have seen with my own eyes in connection with forges.

I believe the life of any blacksmith, especially a rural one, would afford materials for a highly poetical history. I do not speak unadvisedly, having the honour to be free of the forge, and therefore fully competent to give an opinion as to what might be made out of the forge by some dextrous hand. Certainly, the strangest and most entertaining life ever written is that of a blacksmith of the olden north, a certain Volundr, or Velint, who lived in woods and thickets, made keen swords—so keen, indeed, that if placed in a running stream, they would fairly divide an object, however slight, which was borne against them by the water, and who

eventually married a king's daughter, by whom he had a son, who was as bold a knight as his father was a cunning blacksmith. I never see a forge at night, when seated on the back of my horse, at the bottom of a dark lane, but I somehow or other associate it with the exploits of this extraordinary fellow, with many other extraordinary things, amongst which, as I have hinted before, are particular passages of my own life, one or two of which I shall perhaps relate to the reader.

I never associate Vulcan and his Cyclops with the idea of a forge. These gentry would be the very last people in the world to flit across my mind whilst gazing at the forge from the bottom of the dark lane. The truth is, they are highly unpoetical fellows, as well they may be, connected as they are with the Grecian mythology. At the very mention of their names the forge burns dull and dim, as if snow-balls had been suddenly flung into it; the only remedy is to ply the bellows, an operation which I now hasten to perform.

I am in the dingle making a horse-shoe. Having no other horses on whose hoofs I could exercise my art, I made my first essay on those of my own

horse, if that could be called horse which horse was none, being only a pony. Perhaps, if I had sought all England, I should scarcely have found an animal more in need of the kind offices of the smith. On three of his feet there were no shoes at all, and on the fourth only a remnant of one, on which account his hoofs were sadly broken and lacerated by his late journeys over the hard and flinty roads. "You belonged to a tinker before," said I, addressing the animal, "but now you belong to a smith. It is said that the household of the shoemaker invariably go worse shod than that of any other craft. That may be the case of those who make shoes of leather, but it shan't be said of the household of him who makes shoes of iron; at any rate it shan't be said of mine. I tell you what, my gry, whilst you continue with me, you shall both be better shod, and better fed, than you were with your last master."

I am in the dingle making a petul; and I must here observe, that whilst I am making a horse-shoe, the reader need not be surprised if I speak occasionally in the language of the lord of the horse-shoe—Mr. Petulengro. I have for some time past

been plying the peshota, or bellows, endeavouring to raise up the yag, or fire, in my primitive forge. The angar, or coals, are now burning fiercely, casting forth sparks and long vagescoe chipes, or tongues of flame; a small bar of sastra, or iron, is lying in the fire, to the length of ten or twelve inches, and so far it is hot, very hot, exceeding hot, brother. And now you see me prala, snatch the bar of iron, and place the heated end of it upon the covantza, or anvil, and forthwith I commence cooring the sastra as hard as if I had been just engaged by a master at the rate of dui caulor, or two shillings, a day, brother; and when I have beaten the iron till it is nearly cool, and my arm tired, I place it again in the angar, and begin again to rouse the fire with the pudamengro, which signifies the blowing thing, and is another and more common word for bellows; and whilst thus employed I sing a gypsy song, the sound of which is wonderfully in unison with the hoarse moaning of the pudamengro, and ere the song is finished, the iron is again hot and malleable. Behold, I place it once more on the covantza, and recommence hammering; and now I am somewhat at fault; I am in want of assistance;

I want you, brother, or some one else, to take the bar out of my hand and support it upon the covantza, whilst I, applying a chinomescro, or kind of chisel, to the heated iron, cut off with a lusty stroke or two of the shukaro baro, or big hammer, as much as is required for the petul. But having no one to help me, I go on hammering till I have fairly knocked off as much as I want, and then I place the piece in the fire, and again apply the bellows, and take up the song where I left it off; and when I have finished the song, I take out the iron, but this time with my plaistra, or pincers, and then I recommence hammering, turning the iron round and round with my pincers: and now I bend the iron and, lo and behold! it has assumed something of the outline of a petul.

I am not going to enter into farther details with respect to the process—it was rather a wearisome one. I had to contend with various disadvantages; my forge was a rude one, my tools might have been better; I was in want of one or two highly necessary implements, but, above all, manual dexterity. Though free of the forge, I had not practised the albeytarian art for very many years, never since—but

stay, it is not my intention to tell the reader, at least in this place, how and when I became a blacksmith. There was one thing, however, which stood me in good stead in my labour, the same thing which through life has ever been of incalculable utility to me, and has not unfrequently supplied the place of friends, money, and many other things of almost equal importance—iron perseverance, without which all the advantages of time and circumstance are of very little avail in any undertaking. I was determined to make a horse-shoe, and a good one, in spite of every obstacle—ay, in spite of dukkerin. At the end of four days, during which I had fashioned and refashioned the thing at least fifty times, I had made a petul such as no master of the craft need have been ashamed of; with the second shoe I had less difficulty, and, by the time I had made the fourth, I would have scorned to take off my hat to the best smith in Cheshire.

But I had not yet shod my little gry: this I proceeded now to do. After having first well pared the hoofs with my churi, I applied each petul hot, glowing hot, to the pindro. Oh, how the hoofs hissed! and, oh, the pleasant pungent odour which

diffused itself through the dingle!—an odour good for an ailing spirit.

I shod the little horse bravely—merely pricked him once, slightly, with a cafi, for doing which, I remember, he kicked me down; I was not disconcerted, however, but, getting up, promised to be more cautious in future; and having finished the operation, I filed the hoof well with the rin baro, then dismissed him to graze amongst the trees, and, putting my smaller tools into the muchtar, I sat down on my stone, and, supporting my arm upon my knee, leaned my head upon my hand. Heaviness had come over me.

CHAPTER XVII.

SEVERAL CAUSES.—FROGS AND EFTES.—GLOOM AND TWILIGHT.—WHAT SHOULD I DO?—"OUR FATHER."—FELLOW MEN.—WHAT A MERCY!—ALMOST CALM.—FRESH STORE.—HISTORY OF SAUL.—PITCH DARK.

HEAVINESS had suddenly come over me, heaviness of heart, and of body also. I had accomplished the task which I had imposed upon myself, and now that nothing more remained to do, my energies suddenly deserted me, and I felt without strength, and without hope. Several causes, perhaps, co-operated to bring about the state in which I then felt myself. It is not improbable that my energies had been overstrained during the work the progress of which I have attempted to describe; and every one is aware that the results of overstrained energies are feebleness and lassitude—want of nourishment might likewise have something to do with it. During my sojourn in the dingle, my food had been of the simplest and most unsatisfying description, by no means calculated to support the exertion

which the labour I had been engaged upon required; it had consisted of coarse oaten cakes and hard cheese, and for beverage I had been indebted to a neighbouring pit, in which, in the heat of the day, I frequently saw, not golden or silver fish, but frogs and eftes swimming about. I am, however, inclined to believe that Mrs. Hearne's cake had quite as much to do with the matter as insufficient nourishment. I had never entirely recovered from the effects of its poison, but had occasionally, especially at night, been visited by a grinding pain in the stomach, and my whole body had been suffused with cold sweat; and indeed these memorials of the drow have never entirely disappeared—even at the present time they display themselves in my system, especially after much fatigue of body and excitement of mind. So there I sat in the dingle upon my stone, nerveless and hopeless, by whatever cause or causes that state had been produced—there I sat with my head leaning upon my hand, and so I continued a long, long time. At last I lifted my head from my hand, and began to cast anxious, unquiet looks about the dingle—the entire hollow was now enveloped in deep shade—I

cast my eyes up; there was a golden gleam on the tops of the trees which grew towards the upper parts of the dingle; but lower down, all was gloom and twilight—yet, when I first sat down on my stone, the sun was right above the dingle, illuminating all its depths by the rays which it cast perpendicularly down—so I must have sat a long, long time upon my stone. And now, once more, I rested my head upon my hand, but almost instantly lifted it again in a kind of fear, and began looking at the objects before me—the forge, the tools, the branches of the trees, endeavouring to follow their rows, till they were lost in the darkness of the dingle; and now I found my right hand grasping convulsively the three fore fingers of the left, first collectively, and then successively, wringing them till the joints cracked; then I became quiet, but not for long.

Suddenly I started up, and could scarcely repress the shriek which was rising to my lips. Was it possible? Yes, all too certain; the evil one was upon me; the inscrutable horror which I had felt in my boyhood had once more taken possession of me. I had thought that it had forsaken

me—that it would never visit me again; that I had outgrown it; that I might almost bid defiance to it; and I had even begun to think of it without horror, as we are in the habit of doing of horrors of which we conceive we run no danger; and lo! when least thought of, it had seized me again. Every moment I felt it gathering force, and making me more wholly its own. What should I do?—resist, of course; and I did resist. I grasped, I tore, and strove to fling it from me; but of what avail were my efforts? I could only have got rid of it by getting rid of myself: it was a part of myself, or rather it was all myself. I rushed amongst the trees, and struck at them with my bare fists, and dashed my head against them, but I felt no pain. How could I feel pain with that horror upon me! And then I flung myself on the ground, gnawed the earth, and swallowed it: and then I looked round; it was almost total darkness in the dingle, and the darkness added to my horror. I could no longer stay there; up I rose from the ground, and attempted to escape. At the bottom of the winding path which led up the acclivity I fell over something which was lying on the ground; the something moved, and gave a kind of

whine. It was my little horse, which had made that place its lair; my little horse; my only companion and friend in that now awful solitude. I reached the mouth of the dingle; the sun was just sinking in the far west behind me, the fields were flooded with his last gleams. How beautiful everything looked in the last gleams of the sun! I felt relieved for a moment; I was no longer in the horrid dingle. In another minute the sun was gone, and a big cloud occupied the place where he had been: in a little time it was almost as dark as it had previously been in the open part of the dingle. My horror increased; what was I to do?—it was of no use fighting against the horror—that I saw; the more I fought against it, the stronger it became. What should I do: say my prayers? Ah! why not? So I knelt down under the hedge, and said, "Our Father;" but that was of no use; and now I could no longer repress cries—the horror was too great to be borne. What should I do? run to the nearest town or village, and request the assistance of my fellow-men? No! that I was ashamed to do; notwithstanding the horror was upon me, I was ashamed to do that. I knew they would consider

me a maniac, if I went screaming amongst them; and I did not wish to be considered a maniac. Moreover, I knew that I was not a maniac, for I possessed all my reasoning powers, only the horror was upon me—the screaming horror! But how were indifferent people to distinguish between madness and the screaming horror? So I thought and reasoned; and at last I determined not to go amongst my fellow-men, whatever the result might be. I went to the mouth of the dingle, and there, placing myself on my knees, I again said the Lord's Prayer; but it was of no use—praying seemed to have no effect over the horror; the unutterable fear appeared rather to increase than diminish, and I again uttered wild cries, so loud that I was apprehensive they would be heard by some chance passenger on the neighbouring road; I therefore went deeper into the dingle. I sat down with my back against a thorn bush; the thorns entered my flesh, and when I felt them, I pressed harder against the bush; I thought the pain of the flesh might in some degree counteract the mental agony; presently I felt them no longer—the power of the mental horror was so great that it was impossible, with that upon me,

to feel any pain from the thorns. I continued in this posture a long time, undergoing what I cannot describe, and would not attempt if I were able. Several times I was on the point of starting up and rushing anywhere; but I restrained myself, for I knew I could not escape from myself, so why should I not remain in the dingle? So I thought and said to myself, for my reasoning powers were still uninjured. At last it appeared to me that the horror was not so strong, not quite so strong upon me. Was it possible that it was relaxing its grasp, releasing its prey? O what a mercy! but it could not be; and yet—I looked up to heaven, and clasped my hands, and said, "Our Father." I said no more—I was too agitated; and now I was almost sure that the horror had done its worst.

After a little time I arose, and staggered down yet farther into the dingle. I again found my little horse on the same spot as before. I put my hand to his mouth—he licked my hand. I flung myself down by him, and put my arms round his neck; the creature whinnied, and appeared to sympathize with me. What a comfort to have any one, even a dumb brute, to sympathize with me at

such a moment! I clung to my little horse, as if for safety and protection. I laid my head on his neck, and felt almost calm. Presently the fear returned, but not so wild as before; it subsided, came again, again subsided; then drowsiness came over me, and at last I fell asleep, my head supported on the neck of the little horse. I awoke; it was dark, dark night—not a star was to be seen—but I felt no fear, the horror had left me. I arose from the side of the little horse, and went into my tent, lay down, and again went to sleep.

I awoke in the morning weak and sore, and shuddering at the remembrance of what I had gone through on the preceding day; the sun was shining brightly, but it had not yet risen high enough to show its head above the trees which fenced the eastern side of the dingle, on which account the dingle was wet and dank, from the dews of the night. I kindled my fire, and, after sitting by it for some time to warm my frame, I took some of the coarse food which I have already mentioned; notwithstanding my late struggle, and the coarseness of the fare, I ate with appetite. My provisions had by this time been very much dimi-

nished, and I saw that it would be speedily necessary, in the event of my continuing to reside in the dingle, to lay in a fresh store. After my meal, I went to the pit and filled a can with water, which I brought to the dingle, and then again sat down on my stone. I considered what I should next do: it was necessary to do something, or my life in this solitude would be insupportable. What should I do? rouse up my forge and fashion a horse-shoe? But I wanted nerve and heart for such an employment; moreover, I had no motive for fatiguing myself in this manner; my own horse was shod, no other was at hand, and it is hard to work for the sake of working. What should I do? read? Yes, but I had no other book than the Bible which the Welsh Methodist had given me. Well, why not read the Bible? I was once fond of reading the Bible; ay, but those days were long gone by. However, I did not see what else I could well do on the present occasion—so I determined to read the Bible—it was in Welsh; at any rate it might amuse me. So I took the Bible out of the sack, in which it was lying in the cart, and began to read at the place where I chanced to open it. I opened it at that

part where the history of Saul commences. At first I read with indifference, but after some time my attention was riveted, and no wonder, I had come to the visitations of Saul—those dark moments of his, when he did and said such unaccountable things; it almost appeared to me that I was reading of myself; I, too, had my visitations, dark as ever his were. O, how I sympathized with Saul, the tall dark man! I had read his life before, but it had made no impression on me; it had never occurred to me that I was like him; but I now sympathized with Saul, for my own dark hour was but recently passed, and, perhaps, would soon return again; the dark hour came frequently on Saul.

Time wore away; I finished the book of Saul, and, closing the volume, returned it to its place. I then returned to my seat on the stone, and thought of what I had read, and what I had lately undergone. All at once I thought I felt well-known sensations, a cramping of the breast, and a tingling of the soles of the feet; they were what I had felt on the preceding day—they were the forerunners of the fear. I sat motionless on my stone, the sensations passed away, and the fear came not. Dark-

ness was now coming again over the earth; the dingle was again in deep shade; I roused the fire with the breath of the bellows, and sat looking at the cheerful glow; it was cheering and comforting. My little horse came now and lay down on the ground beside the forge; I was not quite deserted. I again ate some of the coarse food, and drank plentifully of the water which I had fetched in the morning. I then put fresh fuel on the fire, and sat for a long time looking on the blaze; I then went into my tent.

I awoke, on my own calculation, about midnight—it was pitch dark, and there was much fear upon me.

CHAPTER XVIII.

FREE AND INDEPENDENT.—I DON'T SEE WHY.—OATS.—A NOISE.—UNWELCOME VISITORS.—WHAT'S THE MATTER?—GOOD DAY TO YE.—THE TALL GIRL.—DOVREFELD.—BLOW ON THE FACE.—CIVIL ENOUGH.—WHAT'S THIS?—VULGAR WOMAN.—HANDS OFF.—GASPING FOR BREATH.—LONG MELFORD.—A PRETTY MANŒUVRE.—A LONG DRAUGHT.—SIGNS OF ANIMATION.—IT WON'T DO.—NO MALICE.—BAD PEOPLE.

Two mornings after the period to which I have brought the reader in the preceding chapter, I sat by my fire at the bottom of the dingle; I had just breakfasted, and had finished the last morsel of food which I had brought with me to that solitude.

"What shall I now do?" said I to myself; "shall I continue here, or decamp?—this is a sad lonely spot—perhaps I had better quit it; but whither shall I go? the wide world is before me, but what can I do therein? I have been in the world already without much success. No, I had better remain here; the place is lonely, it is true, but here I am free and independent, and can do what I please;

but I can't remain here without food. Well, I will find my way to the nearest town, lay in a fresh supply of provision, and come back, turning my back upon the world, which has turned its back upon me. I don't see why I should not write a little sometimes; I have pens and an ink-horn, and for a writing desk I can place the Bible on my knee. I shouldn't wonder if I could write a capital satire on the world on the back of that Bible; but, first of all, I must think of supplying myself with food."

I rose up from the stone on which I was seated, determining to go to the nearest town, with my little horse and cart, and procure what I wanted. The nearest town, according to my best calculation, lay about five miles distant; I had no doubt, however, that, by using ordinary diligence, I should be back before evening. In order to go lighter, I determined to leave my tent standing as it was, and all the things which I had purchased of the tinker, just as they were. "I need not be apprehensive on their account," said I, to myself; "nobody will come here to meddle with them—the great recommendation of this place is its perfect solitude—I

dare say that I could live here six months without seeing a single human visage. I will now harness my little gry and be off to the town."

At a whistle which I gave, the little gry, which was feeding on the bank near the uppermost part of the dingle, came running to me, for by this time he had become so accustomed to me, that he would obey my call, for all the world as if he had been one of the canine species. "Now," said I to him, "we are going to the town to buy bread for myself, and oats for you—I am in a hurry to be back; therefore, I pray you to do your best, and to draw me and the cart to the town with all possible speed, and to bring us back; if you do your best, I promise you oats on your return. You know the meaning of oats, Ambrol?"

Ambrol whinnied as if to let me know that he understood me perfectly well, as indeed he well might, as I had never once fed him during the time that he had been in my possession without saying the word in question to him. Now, Ambrol, in the Gypsy tongue, signifieth a pear.

So I caparisoned Ambrol, and then, going to the cart, I removed two or three things from it

into the tent; I then lifted up the shafts, and was just going to call to the pony to come and be fastened to them, when I thought I heard a noise.

I stood stock still, supporting the shaft of the little cart in my hand, and bending the right side of my face slightly towards the ground, but I could hear nothing; the noise which I thought I had heard was not one of those sounds which I was accustomed to hear in that solitude—the note of a bird, or the rustling of a bough; it was—there I heard it again, a sound very much resembling the grating of a wheel amongst gravel. Could it proceed from the road? Oh, no, the road was too far distant for me to hear the noise of anything moving along it. Again I listened, and now I distinctly heard the sound of wheels, which seemed to be approaching the dingle; nearer and nearer they drew, and presently the sound of wheels was blended with the murmur of voices. Anon I heard a boisterous shout, which seemed to proceed from the entrance of the dingle. "Here are folks at hand," said I, letting the shaft of the cart fall to the ground, "is it possible that they can be coming here?"

My doubts on that point, if I entertained any,

were soon dispelled; the wheels, which had ceased moving for a moment or two, were once again in motion, and were now evidently moving down the winding path which led to my retreat. Leaving my cart, I came forward and placed myself near the entrance of the open space, with my eyes fixed on the path down which my unexpected, and I may say unwelcome, visitors were coming. Presently I heard a stamping or sliding, as if of a horse in some difficulty; then a loud curse, and the next moment appeared a man and a horse and cart; the former holding the head of the horse up to prevent him from falling, of which he was in danger, owing to the precipitious nature of the path. Whilst thus occupied, the head of the man was averted from me. When, however, he had reached the bottom of the descent, he turned his head, and perceiving me, as I stood bare-headed, without either coat or waistcoat, about two yards from him, he gave a sudden start, so violent, that the backward motion of his hand had nearly flung the horse upon his haunches.

"Why don't you move forward?" said a voice from behind, apparently that of a female, "you are stop-

ping up the way, and we shall be all down upon one another;" and I saw the head of another horse overtopping the back of the cart.

"Why don't you move forward, Jack?" said another voice, also of a female, yet higher up the path.

The man stirred not, but remained staring at me in the posture which he had assumed on first perceiving me, his body very much drawn back, his left foot far in advance of his right, and with his right hand still grasping the halter of the horse, which gave way more and more, till it was clean down on its haunches.

"What's the matter?" said the voice which I had last heard.

"Get back with you, Belle, Moll," said the man, still staring at me, "here's something not over canny or comfortable."

"What is it?" said the same voice; "let me pass, Moll, and I'll soon clear the way;" and I heard a kind of rushing down the path.

"You need not be afraid," said I, addressing myself to the man, "I mean you no harm; I am a wanderer like yourself — come here to seek for

shelter—you need not be afraid; I am a Roman chabo by matriculation—one of the right sort, and no mistake—Good day to ye, brother; I bid ye welcome."

The man eyed me suspiciously for a moment—then, turning to his horse with a loud curse, he pulled him up from his haunches, and led him and the cart farther down to one side of the dingle, muttering, as he passed me, "Afraid! Hm!"

I do not remember ever to have seen a more ruffianly looking fellow; he was about six feet high, with an immensely athletic frame; his face was black and bluff, and sported an immense pair of whiskers, but with here and there a grey hair, for his age could not be much under fifty. He wore a faded blue frock coat, corduroys, and highlows; on his black head was a kind of red nightcap, round his bull neck a Barcelona handkerchief—I did not like the look of the man at all.

"Afraid!" growled the fellow, proceeding to unharness his horse; "that was the word, I think."

But other figures were now already upon the scene. Dashing past the other horse and cart,

which by this time had reached the bottom of the pass, appeared an exceedingly tall woman, or rather girl, for she could scarcely have been above eighteen; she was dressed in a tight bodice and a blue stuff gown; hat, bonnet, or cap she had none, and her hair, which was flaxen, hung down on her shoulders unconfined; her complexion was fair, and her features handsome, with a determined but open expression — she was followed by another female, about forty, stout and vulgar looking, at whom I scarcely glanced, my whole attention being absorbed by the tall girl.

"What's the matter, Jack?" said the latter, looking at the man.

"Only afraid, that's all," said the man, still proceeding with his work.

"Afraid at what—at that lad? why, he looks like a ghost—I would engage to thrash him with one hand."

"You might beat me with no hands at all," said I, "fair damsel, only by looking at me—I never saw such a face and figure, both regal—why, you look like Ingeborg, Queen of Norway; she had twelve brothers, you know, and could lick them all,

though they were heroes:—

"'On Dovrefeld in Norway,
Were once together seen,
The twelve heroic brothers
Of Ingeborg the queen.'"

"None of your chaffing, young fellow," said the tall girl, "or I will give you what shall make you wipe your face; be civil, or you will rue it."

"Well, perhaps I was a peg too high," said I, "I ask your pardon — here's something a bit lower:—

"'As I was jawing to the gav yeck divvus
I met on the drom miro Rommany chi—'"

"None of your Rommany chies, young fellow," said the tall girl, looking more menacingly than before, and clenching her fist; "you had better be civil, I am none of your chies; and though I keep company with gypsies, or, to speak more proper, half-and-halfs, I would have you to know that I come of Christian blood and parents, and was born in the great house of Long Melford."

"I have no doubt," said I, "that it was a great house; judging from your size I should'nt wonder if you were born in a church."

"Stay, Belle," said the man, putting himself before the young virago, who was about to rush upon me, "my turn is first"—then, advancing to me in a menacing attitude, he said, with a look of deep malignity, "'Afraid' was the word, wasn't it?"

"It was," said I, "but I think I wronged you; I should have said, aghast, you exhibited every symptom of one labouring under uncontrollable fear."

The fellow stared at me with a look of stupid ferocity, and appeared to be hesitating whether to strike or not: ere he could make up his mind, the tall girl started forward, crying, "He's chaffing; let me at him;" and before I could put myself on my guard, she struck me a blow on the face which had nearly brought me to the ground.

"Enough," said I, putting my hand to my cheek; "you have now performed your promise, and made me wipe my face: now be pacified, and tell me fairly the grounds of this quarrel."

"Grounds!" said the fellow; "didn't you say I was afraid; and if you hadn't, who gave you leave to camp on my ground?"

"Is it your ground?" said I.

"A pretty question," said the fellow; "as if all the world didn't know that. Do you know who I am?"

"I guess I do," said I; "unless I am much mistaken, you are he whom folks call the 'Flaming Tinman.' To tell you the truth, I 'm glad we have met, for I wished to see you. These are your two wives, I suppose; I greet them. There 's no harm done—there 's room enough here for all of us—we shall soon be good friends, I dare say; and when we are a little better acquainted, I 'll tell you my history."

"Well, if that does'nt beat all!" said the fellow.

"I don't think he 's chaffing now," said the girl, whose anger seemed to have subsided on a sudden; "the young man speaks civil enough."

"Civil!" said the fellow, with an oath; "but that 's just like you; with you it is a blow, and all over. Civil! I suppose you would have him stay here, and get into all my secrets, and hear all I may have to say to my two morts."

"Two morts!" said the girl, kindling up, "where are they? Speak for one, and no more. I am no mort of yours, whatever some one else may be. I

tell you one thing, Black John, or Anselo,—for t'other an't your name,—the same thing I told the young man here, be civil, or you will rue it."

The fellow looked at the girl furiously, but his glance soon quailed before hers; he withdrew his eyes, and cast them on my little horse, which was feeding amongst the trees. "What 's this?" said he, rushing forward and seizing the animal. "Why, as I am alive, this is the horse of that mumping villain Slingsby."

"It 's his no longer; I bought it and paid for it."

"It's mine now," said the fellow; "I swore I would seize it the next time I found it on my beat; ay, and beat the master too."

"I am not Slingsby."

"All 's one for that."

"You don't say you will beat me?"

"Afraid was the word."

"I 'm sick and feeble."

"Hold up your fists."

"Won't the horse satisfy you?"

"Horse nor bellows either."

"No mercy, then?"

"Here 's at you."

"Mind your eyes, Jack. There, you 've got it. I thought so," shouted the girl, as the fellow staggered back from a sharp blow in the eye; "I thought he was chaffing at you all along."

"Never mind, Anselo. You know what to do—go in," said the vulgar woman, who had hitherto not spoken a word, but who now came forward with all the look of a fury; "go inapopli; you'll smash ten like he."

The Flaming Tinman took her advice, and came in bent on smashing, but stopped short on receiving a left-handed blow on the nose.

"You'll never beat the Flaming Tinman in that way," said the girl, looking at me doubtfully.

And so I began to think myself, when, in the twinkling of an eye, the Flaming Tinman, disengaging himself of his frock-coat, and dashing off his red night-cap, came rushing in more desperately than ever. To a flush hit which he received in the mouth he paid as little attention as a wild bull would have done; in a moment his arms were around me, and in another he had hurled me down, falling heavily upon me. The fellow's strength appeared to be tremendous.

"Pay him off now," said the vulgar woman. The Flaming Tinman made no reply, but, planting his knee on my breast, seized my throat with two huge horny hands. I gave myself up for dead, and probably should have been so in another minute but for the tall girl, who caught hold of the handkerchief which the fellow wore round his neck, with a grasp nearly as powerful as that with which he pressed my throat.

"Do you call that fair play?" said she.

"Hands off, Belle," said the other woman; "do you call it fair play to interfere? hands off, or I'll be down upon you myself."

But Belle paid no heed to the injunction, and tugged so hard at the handkerchief, that the Flaming Tinman was nearly throttled; suddenly relinquishing his hold of me, he started on his feet, and aimed a blow at my fair preserver, who avoided it, but said coolly:—

"Finish t'other business first, and then I'm your woman whenever you like; but finish it fairly—no foul play when I'm by—I'll be the boy's second, and Moll can pick up you when he happens to knock you down."

The battle during the next ten minutes raged with considerable fury, but it so happened that during this time I was never able to knock the Flaming Tinman down, but on the contrary received six knock-down blows myself. "I can never stand this," said I, as I sat on the knee of Belle, "I am afraid I must give in; the Flaming Tinman hits very hard," and I spat out a mouthful of blood.

"Sure enough you'll never beat the Flaming Tinman in the way you fight—it's of no use flipping at the Flaming Tinman with your left hand; why don't you use your right?"

"Because I'm not handy with it," said I; and then getting up, I once more confronted the Flaming Tinman, and struck him six blows for his one, but they were all left-handed blows, and the blow which the Flaming Tinman gave me knocked me off my legs.

"Now, will you use Long Melford?" said Belle, picking me up.

"I don't know what you mean by Long Melford," said I, gasping for breath.

"Why, this long right of yours," said Belle, feeling my right arm; "if you do, I should'nt wonder if you yet stand a chance."

And now the Flaming Tinman was once more ready, much more ready than myself. I, however, rose from my second's knee as well as my weakness would permit me. On he came, striking left and right, appearing almost as fresh as to wind and spirit as when he first commenced the combat, though his eyes were considerably swelled, and his nether lip was cut in two; on he came, striking left and right, and I did not like his blows at all, or even the wind of them, which was anything but agreeable, and I gave way before him. At last he aimed a blow which, had it taken full effect, would doubtless have ended the battle, but owing to his slipping, the fist only grazed my left shoulder, and came with terrific force against a tree, close to which I had been driven; before the Tinman could recover himself, I collected all my strength, and struck him beneath the ear, and then fell to the ground completely exhausted; and it so happened that the blow which I struck the Tinker beneath the ear was a right-handed blow.

"Hurrah for Long Melford!" I heard Belle exclaim; "there is nothing like Long Melford for shortness, all the world over."

At these words I turned round my head as I lay, and perceived the Flaming Tinman stretched upon the ground apparently senseless. "He is dead," said the vulgar woman, as she vainly endeavoured to raise him up; "he is dead; the best man in all the north country, killed in this fashion, by a boy!" Alarmed at these words, I made shift to get on my feet; and, with the assistance of the woman, placed my fallen adversary in a sitting posture. I put my hand to his heart, and felt a slight pulsation—"He's not dead," said I, "only stunned; if he were let blood, he would recover presently." I produced a penknife which I had in my pocket, and, baring the arm of the Tinman, was about to make the necessary incision, when the woman gave me a violent blow, and, pushing me aside, exclaimed, "I 'll tear the eyes out of your head, if you offer to touch him. Do you want to complete your work, and murder him outright, now he's asleep? you have had enough of his blood already." "You are mad," said I, "I only seek to do him service. Well, if you wont let him be blooded, fetch some water and fling it in his face, you know where the pit is."

"A pretty manœuvre!" said the woman; "leave

my husband in the hands of you and that limmer, who has never been true to us—I should find him strangled or his throat cut when I came back." "Do you go," said I to the tall girl; "take the can and fetch some water from the pit." "You had better go yourself," said the girl, wiping a tear as she looked on the yet senseless form of the Tinker; "you had better go yourself, if you think water will do him good." I had by this time somewhat recovered my exhausted powers, and, taking the can, I bent my steps as fast as I could to the pit; arriving there, I lay down on the brink, took a long draught, and then plunged my head into the water; after which I filled the can, and bent my way back to the dingle. Before I could reach the path which led down into its depths, I had to pass some way along its side; I had arrived at a part immediately over the scene of the last encounter, where the bank, overgrown with trees, sloped precipitously down. Here I heard a loud sound of voices in the dingle; I stopped, and laying hold of a tree, leaned over the bank and listened. The two women appeared to be in hot dispute in the dingle. "It was all owing to you, you limmer," said the vulgar woman to the other; "had

you not interfered, the old man would soon have settled the boy."

"I 'm for fair play and Long Melford," said the other. "If your old man, as you call him, could have settled the boy fairly, he might for all I should have cared, but no foul work for me, and as for sticking the boy with our gulleys when he comes back, as you proposed, I am not so fond of your old man or you that I should oblige you in it, to my soul's destruction." "Hold your tongue, or I 'll—" I listened no farther, but hastened as fast as I could to the dingle. My adversary had just begun to show signs of animation; the vulgar woman was still supporting him, and occasionally cast glances of anger at the tall girl, who was walking slowly up and down. I lost no time in dashing the greater part of the water into the Tinman's face, whereupon he sneezed, moved his hands, and presently looked round him. At first his looks were dull and heavy, and without any intelligence at all; he soon, however, began to recollect himself, and to be conscious of his situation; he cast a scowling glance at me, then one of the deepest malignity at the tall girl, who was still walking about without taking much notice of

what was going forward. At last he looked at his right hand, which had evidently suffered from the blow against the tree, and a half-stifled curse escaped his lips. The vulgar woman now said something to him in a low tone, whereupon he looked at her for a moment, and then got upon his legs. Again the vulgar woman said something to him; her looks were furious, and she appeared to be urging him on to attempt something. I observed that she had a clasped knife in her hand. The fellow remained standing for some time as if hesitating what to do; at last he looked at his hand, and, shaking his head, said something to the woman which I did not understand. The tall girl, however, appeared to overhear him, and, probably repeating his words, said, "No, it won't do; you are right there; and now hear what I have to say,—let bygones be bygones, and let us all shake hands, and camp here, as the young man was saying just now." The man looked at her, and then, without any reply, went to his horse, which was lying down among the trees, and kicking it up, led it to the cart, to which he forthwith began to harness it. The other cart and horse had remained

standing motionless during the whole affair which I have been recounting, at the bottom of the pass. The woman now took the horse by the head, and leading it with the cart into the open part of the dingle, turned both round, and then led them back, till the horse and cart had mounted a little way up the ascent; she then stood still and appeared to be expecting the man. During this proceeding Belle had stood looking on without saying anything; at last, perceiving that the man had harnessed his horse to the other cart, and that both he and the woman were about to take their departure, she said, "You are not going, are you?" Receiving no answer, she continued: "I tell you what, both of you, Black John, and you Moll, his mort, this is not treating me over civilly,—however, I am ready to put up with it, and to go with you if you like, for I bear no malice. I'm sorry for what has happened, but you have only yourselves to thank for it. Now, shall I go with you, only tell me?" The man made no manner of reply, but flogged his horse. The woman, however, whose passions were probably under less control, replied, with a screeching tone, "Stay where you are, you jade, and may

the curse of Judas cling to you,—stay with the bit of a mullo whom you helped, and my only hope is that he may gulley you before he comes to be . . . Have you with us, indeed! after what's past! no, nor nothing belonging to you. Fetch down your mailla go-cart and live here with your chabo." She then whipped on the horse, and ascended the pass, followed by the man. The carts were light, and they were not long in ascending the winding path. I followed to see that they took their departure. Arriving at the top, I found near the entrance a small donkey-cart, which I concluded belonged to the girl. The tinker and his mort were already at some distance; I stood looking after them for a little time, then taking the donkey by the reins I led it with the cart to the bottom of the dingle. Arrived there, I found Belle seated on the stone by the fire-place. Her hair was all dishevelled, and she was in tears.

"They were bad people," said she, "and I did not like them, but they were my only acquaintance in the wide world."

CHAPTER XIX.

AT TEA.—VAPOURS.—ISOPEL BERNERS.—SOFTLY AND KINDLY.—SWEET PRETTY CREATURE.—BREAD AND WATER.—TWO SAILORS.—TRUTH AND CONSTANCY.—VERY STRANGELY.

In the evening of that same day the tall girl and I sat at tea by the fire, at the bottom of the dingle; the girl on a small stool, and myself, as usual, upon my stone.

The water which served for the tea had been taken from a spring of pellucid water in the neighbourhood, which I had not had the good fortune to discover, though it was well known to my companion, and to the wandering people who frequented the dingle.

"This tea is very good," said I, "but I cannot enjoy it as much as if I were well: I feel very sadly."

"How else should you feel," said the girl, "after fighting with the Flaming Tinman? All I wonder at is that you can feel at all! As for the tea, it ought to be good, seeing that it cost me ten shillings a pound."

"That's a great deal for a person in your station to pay."

"In my station! I'd have you to know, young man—however, I haven't the heart to quarrel with you, you look so ill; and after all, it is a good sum for one to pay who travels the roads; but if I must have tea, I like to have the best; and tea I must have, for I am used to it, though I can't help thinking that it sometimes fills my head with strange fancies—what some folks call vapours, making me weep and cry."

"Dear me," said I, "I should never have thought that one of your size and fierceness would weep and cry!"

"My size and fierceness! I tell you what, young man, you are not over civil this evening; but you are ill, as I said before, and I shan't take much notice of your language, at least for the present; as for my size, I am not so much bigger than yourself; and as for being fierce, you should be the last one to fling that at me. It is well for you that I can be fierce sometimes. If I hadn't taken your part against Blazing Bosville, you wouldn't be now taking tea with me."

"It is true that you struck me in the face first; but we'll let that pass. So that man's name is Bosville; what's your own?"

"Isopel Berners."

"How did you get that name?"

"I say, young man, you seem fond of asking questions: will you have another cup of tea?"

"I was just going to ask for another."

"Well, then, here it is, and much good may it do you; as for my name, I got it from my mother."

"Your mother's name, then, was Isopel!"

"Isopel Berners."

"But had you never a father?"

"Yes, I had a father," said the girl, sighing, "but I don't bear his name."

"Is it the fashion, then, in your country for children to bear their mother's name?"

"If you ask such questions, young man, I shall be angry with you. I have told you my name, and, whether my father's or mother's, I am not ashamed of it."

"It is a noble name."

"There you are right, young man. The chaplain

in the great house, where I was born, told me it was a noble name; it was odd enough, he said, that the only three noble names in the county were to be found in the great house; mine was one; the other two were Devereux and Bohun."

"What do you mean by the great house?"

"The workhouse."

"Is it possible that you were born there?"

"Yes, young man; and as you now speak softly and kindly, I will tell you my whole tale. My father was an officer of the sea, and was killed at sea as he was coming home to marry my mother, Isopel Berners. He had been acquainted with her, and had left her; but after a few months he wrote her a letter, to say that he had no rest, and that he repented, and that as soon as his ship came to port he would do her all the reparation in his power. Well, young man, the very day before they reached port they met the enemy, and there was a fight, and my father was killed, after he had struck down six of the enemy's crew on their own deck; for my father was a big man, as I have heard, and knew tolerably well how to use his hands. And when my mother

heard the news, she became half distracted, and ran away into the fields and forests, totally neglecting her business, for she was a small milliner; and so she ran demented about the meads and forests for a long time, now sitting under a tree, and now by the side of a river—at last she flung herself into some water, and would have been drowned, had not some one been at hand and rescued her, whereupon she was conveyed to the great house, lest she should attempt to do herself farther mischief, for she had neither friends nor parents—and there she died three months after, having first brought me into the world. She was a sweet pretty creature, I 'm told, but hardly fit for this world, being neither large, nor fierce, nor able to take her own part. So I was born and bred in the great house, where I learnt to read and sew, to fear God, and to take my own part. When I was fourteen I was put out to service to a small farmer and his wife, with whom, however, I did not stay long, for I was half-starved, and otherwise ill treated, especially by my mistress, who one day attempting to knock me down with a besom, I knocked her down with my fist, and went back to the great house."

"And how did they receive you in the great house?"

"Not very kindly, young man—on the contrary, I was put into a dark room, where I was kept a fortnight on bread and water; I did not much care, however, being glad to have got back to the great house at any rate—the place where I was born, and where my poor mother died; and in the great house I continued two years longer, reading and sewing, fearing God, and taking my own part when necessary. At the end of the two years I was again put out to service, but this time to a rich farmer and his wife, with whom, however, I did not live long, less time, I believe, than with the poor ones, being obliged to leave for . . . ."

"Knocking your mistress down?"

"No, young man, knocking my master down, who conducted himself improperly towards me. This time I did not go back to the great house, having a misgiving that they would not receive me; so I turned my back to the great house where I was born, and where my poor mother died, and wandered for several days I know not whither, supporting myself on a few halfpence which I chanced to have

in my pocket. It happened one day, as I sat under a hedge crying, having spent my last farthing, that a comfortable-looking elderly woman came up in a cart, and seeing the state in which I was, she stopped and asked what was the matter with me; I told her some part of my story, whereupon she said, 'Cheer up, my dear; if you like, you shall go with me, and wait upon me.' Of course I wanted little persuasion, so I got into the cart and went with her. She took me to London and various other places, and I soon found that she was a travelling woman, who went about the country with silks and linen. I was of great use to her, more especially in those places where we met evil company. Once, as we were coming from Dover, we were met by two sailors, who stopped our cart, and would have robbed and stripped us. 'Let me get down,' said I; so I got down, and fought with them both, till they turned round and ran away. Two years I lived with the old gentlewoman, who was very kind to me, almost as kind as a mother; at last she fell sick at a place in Lincolnshire, and after a few days died, leaving me her cart and stock

in trade, praying me only to see her decently buried —which I did, giving her a funeral fit for a gentlewoman. After which I travelled the country—melancholy enough for want of company, but so far fortunate, that I could take my own part when anybody was uncivil to me. At last, passing through the valley of Todmorden, I formed the acquaintance of Blazing Bosville and his wife, with whom I occasionally took journeys for company's sake, for it is melancholy to travel about alone, even when one can take one's own part. I soon found they were evil people; but, upon the whole, they treated me civilly, and I sometimes lent them a little money, so that we got on tolerably well together. He and I, it is true, had once a dispute, and nearly came to blows; for once, when we were alone, he wanted me to marry him, promising, if I would, to turn off Grey Moll, or, if I liked it better, to make her wait upon me as a maid-servant; I never liked him much, but from that hour less than ever. Of the two, I believe Grey Moll to be the best, for she is at any rate true and faithful to him, and I like truth and constancy—don't you, young man?"

"Yes," said I, "they are very nice things. I feel very strangely."

"How do you feel, young man?"

"Very much afraid."

"Afraid, at what? At the Flaming Tinman? Don't be afraid of him. He won't come back, and if he did, he shouldn't touch you in this state, I 'd fight him for you; but he won't come back, so you needn't be afraid of him."

"I 'm not afraid of the Flaming Tinman."

What, then, are you afraid of?"

"The evil one."

"The evil one!" said the girl, "where is he?"

"Coming upon me."

"Never heed," said the girl, "I 'll stand by you."

CHAPTER XX.

HUBBUB OF VOICES.—NO OFFENCE.—NODDING.—THE GUESTS.

THE kitchen of the public house was a large one, and many people were drinking in it; there was a confused hubbub of voices.

I sat down on a bench behind a deal table, of which there were three or four in the kitchen; presently a bulky man, in a green coat of the Newmarket cut, and without a hat, entered, and observing me, came up, and in rather a gruff tone cried, "Want anything, young fellow?"

"Bring me a jug of ale," said I, "if you are the master, as I suppose you are, by that same coat of yours, and your having no hat on your head."

"Don't be saucy, young fellow," said the landlord, for such he was; "don't be saucy, or . . . ." Whatever he intended to say he left unsaid, for

fixing his eyes upon one of my hands, which I had placed by chance upon the table, he became suddenly still.

This was my left hand, which was raw and swollen, from the blows dealt on a certain hard skull in a recent combat. "What do you mean by staring at my hand so?" said I, withdrawing it from the table.

"No offence, young man, no offence," said the landlord, in a quite altered tone; "but the sight of your hand . . .", then observing that our conversation began to attract the notice of the guests in the kitchen, he interrupted himself, saying in an under tone, "But mum's the word for the present, I will go and fetch the ale."

In about a minute he returned, with a jug of ale foaming high. "Here's your health," said he, blowing off the foam, and drinking; but perceiving that I looked rather dissatisfied, he murmured, "All's right, I glory in you; but mum's the word." Then placing the jug on the table, he gave me a confidential nod, and swaggered out of the room.

What can the silly impertinent fellow mean, thought I; but the ale was now before me, and I

hastened to drink, for my weakness was great, and my mind was full of dark thoughts, the remains of the indescribable horror of the preceding night. It may kill me, thought I, as I drank deep—but who cares? anything is better than what I have suffered. I drank deep, and then leaned back against the wall: it appeared as if a vapour was stealing up into my brain, gentle and benign, soothing and stilling the horror and the fear; higher and higher it mounted, and I felt nearly overcome; but the sensation was delicious, compared with that I had lately experienced, and now I felt myself nodding; and, bending down, I laid my head on the table on my folded hands.

And in that attitude I remained some time, perfectly unconscious. At length, by degrees, perception returned, and I lifted up my head. I felt somewhat dizzy and bewildered, but the dark shadow had withdrawn itself from me. And now once more I drank of the jug; this second draught did not produce an overpowering effect upon me—it revived and strengthened me—I felt a new man.

I looked around me; the kitchen had been de-

serted by the greater part of the guests; besides myself, only four remained; these were seated at the farther end. One was haranguing fiercely and eagerly; he was abusing England, and praising America. At last he exclaimed, "So when I gets to New York, I will toss up my hat, and damn the King."

That man must be a Radical, thought I.

CHAPTER XXI.

A RADICAL.— SIMPLE-LOOKING MAN.— CHURCH OF ENGLAND.— THE PRESIDENT. — ARISTOCRACY. — GIN AND WATER. — MENDING THE ROADS. — PERSECUTING CHURCH. — SIMON DE MONTFORT. — BROKEN BELLS. — GET UP.—NOT FOR THE POPE. — QUAY OF NEW YORK. — MUMPERS' DINGLE.—NO WISH TO FIGHT.—FIRST DRAUGHT.—A POOR PIPE.—HALF-A-CROWN BROKE.

THE individual whom I supposed to be a Radical, after a short pause, again uplifted his voice; he was rather a strong-built fellow of about thirty, with an ill-favoured countenance, a white hat on his head, a snuff-coloured coat on his back, and, when he was not speaking, a pipe in his mouth. "Who would live in such a country as England?" he shouted.

"There is no country like America," said his nearest neighbour, a man also in a white hat, and of a very ill-favoured countenance—"there is no country like America," said he, withdrawing a pipe from his mouth; "I think I shall—" and here he took a draught from a jug, the contents of which

he appeared to have in common with the other,—"go to America one of these days myself."

"Poor old England is not such a bad country, after all," said a third, a simple-looking man in a labouring dress, who sat smoking a pipe without anything before him. "If there was but a little more work to be got, I should have nothing to say against her; I hope, however . . . ."

"You hope! who cares what you hope?" interrupted the first, in a savage tone; "you are one of those sneaking hounds who are satisfied with dogs' wages—a bit of bread and a kick. Work, indeed! who, with the spirit of a man, would work for a country where there is neither liberty of speech, nor of action? a land full of beggarly aristocracy, hungry borough-mongers, insolent parsons, and 'their . . . . wives and daughters,' as William Cobbett says, in his 'Register.'"

"Ah, the Church of England has been a source of incalculable mischief to these realms," said another.

The person who uttered these words sat rather aloof from the rest; he was dressed in a long black surtout. I could not see much of his face, partl

owing to his keeping it very much directed to the ground, and partly owing to a large slouched hat which he wore; I observed, however, that his hair was of a reddish tinge. On the table near him was a glass and spoon.

"You are quite right," said the first, alluding to what this last had said, "the Church of England has done incalculable mischief here. I value no religion three halfpence, for I believe in none; but the one that I hate most is the Church of England; so when I get to New York, after I have shown the fine fellows on the quay a spice of me, by . . . the King, I'll toss up my hat again, and . . . the Church of England too."

"And suppose the people of New York should clap you in the stocks?" said I.

These words drew upon me the attention of the whole four. The Radical and his companion stared at me ferociously; the man in black gave me a peculiar glance from under his slouched hat; the simple-looking man in the labouring dress laughed.

"What are you laughing at, you fool?" said the Radical, turning and looking at the other, who ap-

peared to be afraid of him; "hold your noise; and a pretty fellow, you," said he, looking at me, "to come here, and speak against the great American nation."

"I speak against the great American nation!" said I; "I rather paid them a compliment."

"By supposing they would put me in the stocks. Well, I call it abusing them, to suppose they would do any such thing—stocks, indeed!—there are no stocks in all the land. Put me in the stocks! why, the President will come down to the quay, and ask me to dinner, as soon as he hears what I have said about the King and Church."

"I shouldn't wonder," said I, "if you go to America you will say of the President and country, what now you say of the King and Church, and cry out for somebody to send you back to England."

The Radical dashed his pipe to pieces against the table. "I tell you what, young fellow, you are a spy of the aristocracy, sent here to kick up a disturbance."

"Kicking up a disturbance," said I, "is rather inconsistent with the office of spy. If I were a

spy, I should hold my head down, and say nothing."

The man in black partially raised his head, and gave me another peculiar glance.

"Well, if you ar'n't sent to spy, you are sent to bully, to prevent people speaking, and to run down the great American nation; but you sha'n't bully me. I say, down with the aristocracy, the beggarly British aristocracy. Come, what have you to say to that?"

"Nothing," said I.

"Nothing!" repeated the Radical.

"No," said I, "down with them as soon as you can."

"As soon as I can! I wish I could. But I can down with a bully of theirs. Come, will you fight for them?"

"No," said I.

"You won't?"

"No," said I; "though, from what I have seen of them, I should say they are tolerably able to fight for themselves."

"You won't fight for them," said the Radical

triumphantly; "I thought so; all bullies, especially those of the aristocracy, are cowards. Here, landlord," said he, raising his voice, and striking against the table with the jug, "some more ale—he won't fight for his friends."

"A white feather," said his companion.

"He! he!" tittered the man in black.

"Landlord, landlord," shouted the Radical, striking the table with the jug louder than before. "Who called?" said the landlord, coming in at last. "Fill this jug again," said the other, "and be quick about it." "Does any one else want anything?" said the landlord. "Yes," said the man in black; "you may bring me another glass of gin and water." "Cold?" said the landlord. "Yes," said the man in black, "with a lump of sugar in it."

"Gin and water cold, with a lump of sugar in it," said I, and struck the table with my fist.

"Take some?" said the landlord, inquiringly.

"No," said I, "only something came into my head."

"He 's mad," said the man in black.

'Not he," said the Radical. "He 's only sham-

ming; he knows his master is here, and therefore has recourse to these manœuvres, but it won't do. Come, landlord, what are you staring at? Why don't you obey your orders? Keeping your customers waiting in this manner is not the way to increase your business."

The landlord looked at the Radical, and then at me. At last, taking the jug and glass he left the apartment, and presently returned with each filled with its respective liquor. He placed the jug with beer before the Radical, and the glass with the gin and water before the man in black, and then, with a wink to me, he sauntered out.

"Here is your health, sir," said the man of the snuff-coloured coat, addressing himself to the one in black; "I honour you for what you said about the Church of England. Every one who speaks against the Church of England has my warm heart. Down with it, I say, and may the stones of it be used for mending the roads, as my friend William says in his Register."

The man in black, with a courteous nod of his head, drank to the man in the snuff-coloured coat. "With respect to the steeples," said he, "I am

not altogether of your opinion; they might be turned to better account than to serve to mend the roads; they might still be used as places of worship, but not for the worship of the Church of England. I have no fault to find with the steeples, it is the Church itself which I am compelled to arraign; but it will not stand long, the respectable part of its ministers are already leaving it. It is a bad Church, a persecuting Church."

"Whom does it persecute?" said I.

The man in black glanced at me slightly, and then replied slowly, "the Catholics."

"And do those whom you call Catholics never persecute?" said I.

"Never," said the man in black.

"Did you ever read 'Fox's Book of Martyrs'?" said I.

"He! he!" tittered the man in black, "there is not a word of truth in 'Fox's Book of Martyrs.'"

"Ten times more than in the 'Flos Sanctorum,'" said I.

The man in black looked at me, but made no answer.

"And what say you to the Massacre of the Albigenses and the Vaudois, 'whose bones lie scattered on the cold Alp,' or the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes."

The man in black made no answer.

"Go to," said I, "it is because the Church of England is not a persecuting church, that those whom you call the respectable part are leaving her; it is because they can't do with the poor Dissenters what Simon de Montfort did with the Albigenses, and the cruel Piedmontese with the Vaudois, that they turn to bloody Rome; the Pope will no doubt welcome them, for the Pope, do you see, being very much in want, will welcome . . . ."

"Hollo!" said the Radical, interfering, "what are you saying about the Pope? I say, hurrah for the Pope; I value no religion three halfpence, as I said before, but if I were to adopt any, it should be the Popish as it 's called, because I conceives the Popish to be the grand enemy of the Church of England, of the beggarly aristocracy, and the boroughmonger system, so I won't hear the Pope abused while I am by. Come, don't look fierce. You won't fight, you know, I have proved it; but I

will give you another chance—I will fight for the Pope, will you fight against him?"

"O dear me, yes," said I, getting up and stepping forward. "I am a quiet peaceable young man, and, being so, am always ready to fight against the Pope—the enemy of all peace and quiet; to refuse fighting for the aristocracy is a widely different thing from refusing to fight against the Pope; so come on, if you are disposed to fight for him. To the Pope broken bells, to Saint James broken shells. No Popish vile oppression, but the Protestant succession. Confusion to the Groyne, hurrah for the Boyne, for the army at Clonmel, and the Protestant young gentlemen who live there as well."

"An Orangeman," said the man in black.

"Not a Platitude," said I.

The man in black gave a slight start.

"Amongst that family," said I, "no doubt, something may be done, but amongst the Methodist preachers I should conceive that the success would not be great."

The man in black sat quite still.

"Especially amongst those who have wives," I added.

The man in black stretched his hand towards his gin and water.

"However," said I, "we shall see what the grand movement will bring about, and the results of the lessons in elocution."

The man in black lifted the glass up to his mouth, and, in doing so, let the spoon fall.

"But what has this to do with the main question?" said I; "I am waiting here to fight against the Pope."

"Come, Hunter," said the companion of the man in the snuff-coloured coat, "get up, and fight for the Pope."

"I don't care for the young fellow," said the man in the snuff-coloured coat.

"I know you don't," said the other, "so get up, and serve him out."

"I could serve out three like him," said the man in the snuff-coloured coat.

"So much the better for you," said the other, "the present work will be all the easier for you, get up, and serve him out at once."

The man in the snuff-coloured coat did not stir.

"Who shows the white feather now?" said the simple-looking man.

"He! he! he!" tittered the man in black.

"Who told you to interfere?" said the Radical, turning ferociously towards the simple-looking man; "say another word, and I'll...." "And you!" said he, addressing himself to the man in black, "a pretty fellow you to turn against me, after I had taken your part. I tell you what, you may fight for yourself. I'll see you and your Pope in the pit of Eldon, before I fight for either of you, so make the most of it."

"Then you won't fight?" said I.

"Not for the Pope," said the Radical; "I'll see the Pope...."

"Dear me!" said I, "not fight for the Pope, whose religion you would turn to, if you were inclined for any. I see how it is, you are not fond of fighting; but I'll give you another chance—you were abusing the Church of England just now: I'll fight for it—will you fight against it?"

"Come, Hunter," said the other, "get up, and fight against the Church of England."

"I have no particular quarrel against the Church

of England," said the man in the snuff-coloured coat, "my quarrel is with the aristocracy. If I said anything against the Church, it was merely for a bit of corollary, as Master William Cobbett would say; the quarrel with the Church belongs to this fellow in black; so let him carry it on. However," he continued suddenly, "I won't slink from the matter either; it shall never be said by the fine fellows on the quay of New York, that I wouldn't fight against the Church of England. So down with the beggarly aristocracy, the Church, and the Pope, to the bottom of the pit of Eldon, and may the Pope fall first, and the others upon him."

Thereupon, dashing his hat on the table, he placed himself in an attitude of offence, and rushed forward. He was, as I have said before, a powerful fellow, and might have proved a dangerous antagonist, more especially to myself, who, after my recent encounter with the Flaming Tinman, and my wrestlings with the evil one, was in anything but fighting order. Any collision, however, was prevented by the landlord, who, suddenly appearing, thrust himself between us. "There shall be no fighting here," said he, "no one shall fight in this

house, except it be with myself; so if you two have anything to say to each other, you had better go into the field behind the house. But, you fool," said he, pushing Hunter violently on the breast, "do you know whom you are going to tackle with? —this is the young chap that beat Blazing Bosville, only as late as yesterday, in Mumpers Dingle. Grey Moll told me all about it last night, when she came for some brandy for her husband, who, she said, had been half killed; and she described the young man to me so closely, that I knew him at once, that is, as soon as I saw how his left hand was bruised, for she told me he was a left-hand hitter." "Ar'n't it all true, young man? Ar'n't you he that beat Flaming Bosville in Mumpers' Dingle?" "I never beat Flaming Bosville," said I, "he beat himself. Had he not struck his hand against a tree, I shouldn't be here at the present moment." "Hear! hear!" said the landlord, "now that's just as it should be; I like a modest man, for, as the parson says, nothing sits better upon a young man than modesty. I remember, when I was young, fighting with Tom of Hopton, the best man that ever pulled off coat in England. I remember, too,

that I won the battle; for I happened to hit Tom of Hopton in the mark, as he was coming in, so that he lost his wind, and falling squelch on the ground, do ye see, he lost the battle, though I am free to confess that he was a better man than myself; indeed, the best man that ever fought in England; yet still I won the battle, as every customer of mine, and everybody within twelve miles round, has heard over and over again. Now, Mr. Hunter, I have one thing to say, if you choose to go into the field behind the house, and fight the young man, you can. I'll back him for ten pounds; but no fighting in my kitchen — because why? I keeps a decent kind of an establishment."

"I have no wish to fight the young man," said Hunter; "more especially as he has nothing to say for the aristocracy. If he chose to fight for them, indeed—but he won't, I know; for I see he's a decent, respectable, young man; and, after all, fighting is a blackguard way of settling a dispute; so I have no wish to fight; however, there is one thing I'll do," said he, uplifting his fist, "I'll fight this fellow in black here for half-a-crown, or

for nothing, if he pleases; it was he that got up the last dispute between me and the young man, with his Pope and his nonsense; so I will fight him for anything he pleases, and perhaps the young man will be my second; whilst you" . . . .

"Come, Doctor," said the landlord, "or whatsoever you be, will you go into the field with Hunter? I'll second you, only you must back yourself. I'll lay five pounds on Hunter, if you are inclined to back yourself; and will help you to win it as far, do you see, as a second can; because why? I always likes to do the fair thing."

"Oh! I have no wish to fight," said the man in black, hastily; "fighting is not my trade. If I have given any offence, I beg anybody's pardon."

"Landlord," said I, "what have I to pay?"

"Nothing at all," said the landlord; "glad to see you. This is the first time that you have been at my house, and I never charge new customers, at least customers such as you, anything for the first draught. You 'll come again, I dare say; shall always be glad to see you. I won't take it," said he, as I put sixpence on the table; "I won't take it."

"Yes, you shall," said I; "but not in payment

for anything I have had myself: it shall serve to pay for a jug of ale for that gentleman," said I, pointing to the simple-looking individual; "he is smoking a poor pipe. I do not mean to say that a pipe is a bad thing; but a pipe without ale, do you see . . . . "

"Bravo!" said the landlord, "that's just the conduct I like."

"Bravo!" said Hunter. "I shall be happy to drink with the young man whenever I meet him at New York, where, do you see, things are better managed than here."

"If I have given offence to anybody," said the man in black, "I repeat that I ask pardon,—more especially to the young gentleman, who was perfectly right to stand up for his religion, just as I—not that I am of any particular religion, no more than this honest gentleman here," bowing to Hunter; "but I happen to know something of the Catholics—several excellent friends of mine are Catholics—and of a surety the Catholic religion is an ancient religion, and a widely-extended religion, though it certainly is not a universal religion, but it has of late made considerable pro-

gress, even amongst those nations who have been particularly opposed to it—amongst the Prussians and the Dutch, for example, to say nothing of the English; and then, in the East, amongst the Persians, amongst the Armenians."

"The Armenians," said I; "O dear me, the Armenians . . . ."

"Have you anything to say about those people, sir?" said the man in black, lifting up his glass to his mouth.

"I have nothing farther to say," said I, "than that the roots of Ararat are occasionally found to be deeper than those of Rome."

"There's half-a-crown broke," said the landlord, as the man in black let fall the glass, which was broken to pieces on the floor. "You will pay me the damage, friend, before you leave this kitchen. I like to see people drink freely in my kitchen, but not too freely, and I hate breakages; because why? I keeps a decent kind of an establishment."

CHAPTER XXII.

THE DINGLE. — GIVE THEM ALE. — NOT OVER COMPLIMENTARY. — AMERICA. — MANY PEOPLE. — WASHINGTON. — PROMISCUOUS COMPANY. — LANGUAGE OF THE ROADS. — THE OLD WOMEN. — NUMERALS. — THE MAN IN BLACK.

THE public-house where the scenes which I have attempted to describe in the preceding chapters took place, was at the distance of about two miles from the dingle. The sun was sinking in the west by the time I returned to the latter spot. I found Belle seated by a fire, over which her kettle was suspended. During my absence she had prepared herself a kind of tent, consisting of large hoops covered over with tarpauling, quite impenetrable to rain, however violent. "I am glad you are returned," said she, as soon as she perceived me; "I began to be anxious about you. Did you take my advice?"

"Yes," said I; "I went to the public-house and drank ale, as you advised me; it cheered,

strengthened, and drove away the horror from my mind—I am much beholden to you."

"I knew it would do you good," said Belle; "I remembered that when the poor women in the great house were afflicted with hysterics, and fearful imaginings, the surgeon, who was a good kind man, used to say, 'Ale, give them ale, and let it be strong.'"

"He was no advocate for tea, then?" said I.

"He had no objection to tea; but he used to say, 'Everything in its season.' Shall we take ours now—I have waited for you."

"I have no objection," said I; "I feel rather heated, and at present should prefer tea to ale—'Everything in its season,' as the surgeon said."

Thereupon Belle prepared tea, and, as we were taking it, she said—"What did you see and hear at the public-house?"

"Really," said I, "you appear to have your full portion of curiosity; what matters it to you what I saw and heard at the public-house?"

"It matters very little to me," said Belle; "I merely inquired of you, for the sake of a little conversation—you were silent, and it is uncomfortable

for two people to sit together without opening their lips—at least I think so."

"One only feels uncomfortable," said I, "in being silent, when one happens to be thinking of the individual with whom one is in company. To tell you the truth, I was not thinking of my companion, but of certain company with whom I had been at the public-house."

"Really, young man," said Belle, "you are not over complimentary; but who may this wonderful company have been—some young . . . . ?" and here Belle stopped.

"No," said I, "there was no young person—if person you were going to say. There was a big portly landlord, whom I dare say you have seen; a noisy savage Radical, who wanted at first to fasten upon me a quarrel about America, but who subsequently drew in his horns; then there was a strange fellow, a prowling priest, I believe, whom I have frequently heard of, who at first seemed disposed to side with the Radical against me, and afterwards with me against the Radical. There, you know my company, and what took place."

"Was there no one else?" said Belle.

"You are mighty curious," said I. "No, none else, except a poor simple mechanic, and some common company, who soon went away."

Belle looked at me for a moment, and then appeared to be lost in thought—"America!" said she, musingly—"America!"

"What of America?" said I.

"I have heard that it is a mighty country."

"I dare say it is," said I; "I have heard my father say that the Americans are first-rate marksmen."

"I heard nothing about that," said Belle; "what I heard was, that it is a great and goodly land, where people can walk about without jostling, and where the industrious can always find bread; I have frequently thought of going thither."

"Well," said I, "the Radical in the public-house will perhaps be glad of your company thither; he is as great an admirer of America as yourself, though I believe on different grounds."

"I shall go by myself," said Belle, "unless—unless that should happen which is not likely—I am not fond of Radicals no more than I am of scoffers and mockers."

"Do you mean to say that I am a scoffer and mocker?"

"I don't wish to say you are," said Belle; "but some of your words sound strangely like scoffing and mocking. I have now one thing to beg, which is, that if you have anything to say against America, you would speak it out boldly."

"What should I have to say against America? I never was there."

"Many people speak against America who never were there."

"Many people speak in praise of America who never were there; but with respect to myself, I have not spoken for or against America."

"If you liked America you would speak in its praise."

"By the same rule, if I disliked America I should speak against it."

"I can't speak with you," said Belle; "but I see you dislike the country."

"The country!"

"Well, the people—don't you?"

"I do."

"Why do you dislike them?"

"Why I have heard my father say that the American marksmen, led on by a chap of the name of Washington, sent the English to the right-about in double-quick time."

"And that is your reason for disliking the Americans?"

"Yes," said I, "that is my reason for disliking them."

"Will you take another cup of tea?" said Belle.

I took another cup; we were again silent. "It is rather uncomfortable," said I, at last, "for people to sit together without having anything to say."

"Were you thinking of your company?" said Belle.

"What company?" said I.

"The present company."

"The present company! oh, ah—I remember that I said one only feels uncomfortable in being silent with a companion, when one happens to be thinking of the companion. Well, I had been thinking of you the last two or three minutes, and had just come to the conclusion, that to prevent us both feeling occasionally uncomfortably towards each other, having nothing to say, it would

be as well to have a standing subject, on which to employ our tongues. Belle, I have determined to give you lessons in Armenian."

"What is Armenian?

"Did you ever hear of Ararat?"

"Yes, that was the place where the ark rested; I have heard the chaplain in the great house talk of it; besides, I have read of it in the Bible."

"Well, Armenian is the speech of people of that place, and I should like to teach it you."

"To prevent . . . ."

"Ay, ay, to prevent our occasionally feeling uncomfortable together. Your acquiring it besides might prove of ulterior advantage to us both; for example, suppose you and I were in promiscuous company, at Court, for example, and you had something to communicate to me which you did not wish any one else to be acquainted with, how safely you might communicate it to me in Armenian."

"Would not the language of the roads do as well?" said Belle.

"In some places it would," said I, "but not at Court, owing to its resemblance to thieves' slang. There is Hebrew, again, which I was thinking of

teaching you, till the idea of being presented at Court made me abandon it, from the probability of our being understood, in the event of our speaking it, by at least half a dozen people in our vicinity. There is Latin, it is true, or Greek, which we might speak aloud at Court with perfect confidence of safety, but upon the whole I should prefer teaching you Armenian, not because it would be a safer language to hold communication with at Court, but because, not being very well grounded in it myself, I am apprehensive that its words and forms may escape from my recollection, unless I have sometimes occasion to call them forth."

"I am afraid we shall have to part company before I have learnt it," said Belle; "in the mean time, if I wish to say anything to you in private, somebody being by, shall I speak in the language of the roads?"

"If no roadster is nigh you may," said I, "and I will do my best to understand you. Belle, I will now give you a lesson in Armenian."

"I suppose you mean no harm," said Belle.

"Not in the least; I merely propose the thing to

prevent our occasionally feeling uncomfortable together. Let us begin."

"Stop till I have removed the tea things," said Belle; and, getting up, she removed them to her own encampment.

"I am ready," said Belle, returning, and taking her former seat, "to join with you in anything which will serve to pass away the time agreeably, provided there is no harm in it."

"Belle," said I, "I have determined to commence the course of Armenian lessons by teaching you the numerals; but, before I do that, it will be as well to tell you that the Armenian language is called Haik."

"I am sure that word will hang upon my memory," said Belle.

"Why hang upon it?" said I.

"Because the old women in the great house used to call so the chimney-hook, on which they hung the kettle; in like manner, on the hake of my memory I will hang your hake."

"Good!" said I, "you will make an apt scholar; but mind that I did not say hake, but haik; the

words are, however, very much alike; and, as you observe, upon your hake you may hang my haik. We will now proceed to the numerals."

"What are numerals?" said Belle.

"Numbers. I will say the Haikan numbers up to ten. There—have you heard them?"

"Yes."

"Well, try and repeat them."

"I only remember number one," said Belle, "and that because it is me."

"I will repeat them again," said I, "and pay greater attention. Now, try again."

"Me, jergo, earache.'

"I neither said jergo, nor earache. I said yergou and yerek. Belle, I am afraid I shall have some difficulty with you as a scholar."

Belle made no answer. Her eyes were turned in the direction of the winding path which led from the bottom of the hollow, where we were seated, to the plain above. "Gorgio shunella," she said, at length, in a low voice.

"Pure Rommany," said I; "where?" I added, in a whisper.

"Dovey odoi," said Belle, nodding with her head towards the path.

"I will soon see who it is," said I; and starting up, I rushed towards the pathway, intending to lay violent hands on any one I might find lurking in its windings. Before, however, I had reached its commencement, a man, somewhat above the middle height, advanced from it into the dingle, in whom I recognised the man in black whom I had seen in the public-house.

CHAPTER XXIII.

BUONA SERA.—RATHER APPREHENSIVE.—THE STEEP BANK.—LOVELY VIRGIN.—HOSPITALITY.—TORY MINISTER.—CUSTOM OF THE COUNTRY.—SNEERING SMILE.—WANDERING ZIGAN.—GYPSIES' CLOAKS.—CERTAIN FACULTY. — ACUTE ANSWER. — VARIOUS WAYS. — ADDIO. — BEST HOLLANDS.

THE man in black and myself stood opposite to each other for a minute or two in silence; I will not say that we confronted each other that time, for the man in black, after a furtive glance, did not look me in the face, but kept his eyes fixed, apparently on the leaves of a bunch of ground nuts which were growing at my feet. At length, looking around the dingle, he exclaimed, "Buona sera, I hope I don't intrude."

"You have as much right here," said I, "as I or my companion; but you had no right to stand listening to our conversation."

"I was not listening," said the man, "I was hesitating whether to advance or retire; and if I heard some of your conversation, the fault was not mine."

"I do not see why you should have hesitated if your intentions were good," said I.

"I think the kind of place in which I found myself might excuse some hesitation," said the man in black, looking around; "moreover, from what I had seen of your demeanour at the public-house, I was rather apprehensive that the reception I might experience at your hands might be more rough than agreeable."

"And what may have been your motive for coming to this place?" said I.

"Per far visita a sua signoria, ecco il motivo."

"Why do you speak to me in that gibberish," said I; "do you think I understand it?"

"It is not Armenian," said the man in black; "but it might serve, in a place like this, for the breathing of a little secret communication, were any common roadster near at hand. It would not do at Court, it is true, being the language of singing women, and the like; but we are not at Court—when we are, I can perhaps summon up a little indifferent Latin, if I have anything private to communicate to the learned Professor."

And at the conclusion of this speech the man in

black lifted up his head, and, for some moments, looked me in the face. The muscles of his own seemed to be slightly convulsed, and his mouth opened in a singular manner.

"I see," said I, "that for some time you were standing near me and my companion, in the mean act of listening."

"Not at all," said the man in black; "I heard from the steep bank above, that to which I have now alluded, whilst I was puzzling myself to find the path which leads to your retreat. I made, indeed, nearly the compass of the whole thicket before I found it."

"And how did you know that I was here?" I demanded.

"The landlord of the public-house, with whom I had some conversation concerning you, informed me that he had no doubt I should find you in this place, to which he gave me instructions not very clear. But, now I am here, I crave permission to remain a little time, in order that I may hold some communion with you."

"Well," said I, "since you are come, you are welcome; please to step this way."

Thereupon I conducted the man in black to the fire-place, where Belle was standing, who had risen from her stool on my springing up to go in quest of the stranger. The man in black looked at her with evident curiosity, then making her rather a graceful bow, "Lovely virgin," said he, stretching out his hand, "allow me to salute your fingers."

"I am not in the habit of shaking hands with strangers," said Belle.

"I did not presume to request to shake hands with you," said the man in black, "I merely wished to be permitted to salute with my lips the extremity of your two fore-fingers."

"I never permit anything of the kind," said Belle, "I do not approve of such unmanly ways, they are only befitting those who lurk in corners or behind trees, listening to the conversation of people who would fain be private."

"Do you take me for a listener then?" said the man in black.

"Ay, indeed I do," said Belle; "the young man may receive your excuses, and put confidence in them if he please, but for my part I neither admit them, nor believe them;" and thereupon

flinging her long hair back, which was hanging over her cheeks, she seated herself on her stool.

"Come, Belle," said I, "I have bidden the gentleman welcome, "I beseech you, therefore, to make him welcome; he is a stranger, where we are at home, therefore, even did we wish him away, we are bound to treat him kindly."

"That's not English doctrine," said the man in black.

"I thought the English prided themselves on their hospitality," said I.

"They do so," said the man in black; "they are proud of showing hospitality to people above them, that is, to those who do not want it, but of the hospitality which you were now describing, and which is Arabian, they know nothing. No Englishman will tolerate another in his house, from whom he does not expect advantage of some kind, and to those from whom he does, he can be civil enough. An Englishman thinks that, because he is in his own house, he has a right to be boorish and brutal to any one who is disagreeable to him, as all those are who are really in want of assistance. Should a hunted fugitive rush into an Englishman's house,

beseeching protection, and appealing to the master's feelings of hospitality, the Englishman would knock him down in the passage."

"You are too general," said I, "in your strictures. Lord . . ., the unpopular Tory minister, was once chased through the streets of London by a mob, and, being in danger of his life, took shelter in the shop of a Whig linendraper, declaring his own unpopular name, and appealing to the linendraper's feelings of hospitality; whereupon the linendraper, utterly forgetful of all party rancour, nobly responded to the appeal, and telling his wife to conduct his lordship upstairs, jumped over the counter, with his ell in his hand, and placing himself with half-a-dozen of his assistants at the door of his boutique, manfully confronted the mob, telling them that he would allow himself to be torn to a thousand pieces, ere he would permit them to injure a hair of his lordship's head: what do you think of that?"

"He! he! he!" tittered the man in black.

"Well," said I, "I am afraid your own practice is not very different from that which you have been just now describing; you sided with the Radical in

the public-house against me, as long as you thought him the most powerful, and then turned against him, when you saw he was cowed. What have you to say to that?"

"O! when one is in Rome, I mean England, one must do as they do in England, I was merely conforming to the custom of the country, he! he! but I beg your pardon here, as I did in the public-house. I made a mistake."

"Well," said I, "we will drop the matter, but pray seat yourself on that stone, and I will sit down on the grass near you."

The man in black, after proffering two or three excuses for occupying what he supposed to be my seat, sat down upon the stone, and I squatted down, gypsy fashion, just opposite to him, Belle sitting on her stool at a slight distance on my right. After a time I addressed him thus: "Am I to reckon this a mere visit of ceremony? should it prove so, it will be, I believe, the first visit of the kind ever paid me."

"Will you permit me to ask," said the man in black, ... "the weather is very warm," said he, interrupting himself, and taking off his hat.

I now observed that he was partly bald, his red hair having died away from the fore part of his crown—his forehead was high, his eyebrows scanty, his eyes grey and sly, with a downward tendency, his nose was slightly aquiline, his mouth rather large—a kind of sneering smile played continually on his lips, his complexion was somewhat rubicund.

"A bad countenance," said Belle, in the language of the roads, observing that my eyes were fixed on his face.

"Does not my countenance please you, fair damsel?" said the man in black, resuming his hat, and speaking in a peculiarly gentle voice.

"How," said I, "do you understand the language of the roads?"

"As little as I do Armenian," said the man in black; "but I understand look and tone."

"So do I, perhaps," retorted Belle; "and, to tell you the truth, I like your tone as little as your face."

"For shame," said I; "have you forgot what I was saying just now about the duties of hospitality? You have not yet answered my question," said I,

addressing myself to the man, "with respect to your visit."

"Will you permit me to ask who you are?"

"Do you see the place where I live?" said I.

"I do," said the man in black, looking around.

"Do you know the name of this place?"

"I was told it was Mumpers' or Gypsies' Dingle," said the man in black.

"Good," said I; "and this forge and tent, what do they look like?"

"Like the forge and tent of a wandering Zigan; I have seen the like in Italy."

"Good," said I; "they belong to me."

"Are you, then, a Gypsy?" said the man in black.

"What else should I be?"

"But you seem to have been acquainted with various individuals with whom I have likewise had acquaintance; and you have even alluded to matters, and even words, which have passed between me and them."

"Do you know how Gypsies live?" said I.

"By hammering old iron, I believe, and telling fortunes."

"Well," said I, "there's my forge, and yonder is some iron, though not old, and by your own confession I am a soothsayer."

"But how did you come by your knowledge?"

"O," said I, "if you want me to reveal the secrets of my trade, I have, of course, nothing farther to say. Go to the scarlet dyer, and ask him how he dyes cloth."

"Why scarlet?" said the man in black. "Is it because Gypsies blush like scarlet?"

"Gypsies never blush," said I; "but Gypsies' cloaks are scarlet."

"I should almost take you for a Gypsy," said the man in black, "but for . . . ."

"For what?" said I.

"But for that same lesson in Armenian, and your general knowledge of languages; as for your manners and appearance I will say nothing," said the man in black, with a titter.

"And why should not a Gypsy possess a knowledge of languages?" said I.

"Because the Gypsy race is perfectly illiterate," said the man in black; "they are possessed, it is true, of a knavish acuteness, and are particularly

noted for giving subtle and evasive answers—and in your answers, I confess, you remind me of them; but that one of the race should acquire a learned language like the Armenian, and have a general knowledge of literature, is a thing che io non credo afatto."

"What do you take me for?" said I.

"Why," said the man in black, "I should consider you to be a philologist, who, for some purpose, has taken up a Gypsy life; but I confess to you that your way of answering questions is far too acute for a philologist."

"And why should not a philologist be able to answer questions acutely?" said I.

"Because the philological race is the most stupid under Heaven," said the man in black; "they are possessed, it is true, of a certain faculty for picking up words, and a memory for retaining them; but that any one of the sect should be able to give a rational answer, to say nothing of an acute one, on any subject—even though the subject were philology—is a thing of which I have no idea."

"But you found me giving a lesson in Armenian to this handmaid?"

"I believe I did," said the man in black.

"And you heard me give what you are disposed to call acute answers to the questions you asked me?"

"I believe I did," said the man in black.

"And would any one but a philologist think of giving a lesson in Armenian to a handmaid in a dingle?"

"I should think not," said the man in black.

"Well, then, don't you see that it is possible for a philologist to give not only a rational, but an acute answer?"

"I really don't know," said the man in black.

"What's the matter with you?" said I.

"Merely puzzled," said the man in black.

"Puzzled?"

"Yes."

"Really puzzled?"

"Yes."

"Remain so."

"Well," said the man in black, rising, "puzzled or not, I will no longer trespass upon your and this young lady's retirement; only allow me, before I go, to apologize for my intrusion."

"No apology is necessary," said I; "will you please to take anything before you go? I think this young lady, at my request, would contrive to make you a cup of tea."

"Tea!" said the man in black; "he! he! I don't drink tea; I don't like it—if, indeed, you had," and here he stopped.

"There's nothing like gin and water, is there?" said I, "but I am sorry to say I have none."

"Gin and water," said the man in black, "how do you know that I am fond of gin and water?"

"Did I not see you drinking some at the public-house?"

"You did," said the man in black, "and I remember that, when I called for some, you repeated my words—permit me to ask, is gin and water an unusual drink in England?"

"It is not usually drunk cold, and with a lump of sugar," said I.

"And did you know who I was by my calling for it so?"

"Gypsies have various ways of obtaining information," said I.

"With all your knowledge," said the man in

black, "you do not appear to have known that I was coming to visit you?"

"Gypsies do not pretend to know anything which relates to themselves," said I; "but I advise you, if you ever come again, to come openly."

"Have I your permission to come again?" said the man in black.

"Come when you please; this dingle is as free for you as me."

"I will visit you again," said the man in black—"till then, addio."

"Belle," said I, after the man in black had departed, "we did not treat that man very hospitably; he left us without having eaten or drunk at our expense."

"You offered him some tea," said Belle, "which, as it is mine, I should have grudged him, for I like him not."

"Our liking or disliking him had nothing to do with the matter, he was our visitor and ought not to have been permitted to depart dry; living as we do in this desert, we ought always to be prepared to administer to the wants of our visitors. Belle, do you know where to procure any good Hollands?"

"I think I do," said Belle, "but . . . . "

"I will have no buts. Belle, I expect that with as little delay as possible you procure, at my expense, the best Hollands you can find."

CHAPTER XXIV.

EXCURSIONS. — ADVENTUROUS ENGLISH. — OPAQUE FORESTS. — THE GREATEST PATIENCE.

TIME passed on, and Belle and I lived in the dingle; when I say lived, the reader must not imagine that we were always there. She went out upon her pursuits, and I went out where inclination led me; but my excursions were very short ones, and hers occasionally occupied whole days and nights. If I am asked how we passed the time when we were together in the dingle, I would answer that we passed the time very tolerably, all things considered; we conversed together, and when tired of conversing I would sometimes give Belle a lesson in Armenian; her progress was not particularly brilliant, but upon the whole satisfactory; in about a fortnight she had hung up one hundred Haikan numerals upon the hake of her memory. I found her conversation

highly entertaining; she had seen much of England and Wales, and had been acquainted with some of the most remarkable characters who travelled the roads at that period; and let me be permitted to say that many remarkable characters have travelled the roads of England, of whom fame has never said a word. I loved to hear her anecdotes of these people; some of whom I found had occasionally attempted to lay violent hands either upon her person or effects, and had invariably been humbled by her without the assistance of either justice or constable. I could clearly see, however, that she was rather tired of England, and wished for a change of scene; she was particularly fond of talking of America, to which country her aspirations chiefly tended. She had heard much of America, which had excited her imagination; for at that time America was much talked of, on roads and in homesteads—at least, so said Belle, who had good opportunities of knowing—and most people allowed that it was a good country for adventurous English. The people who chiefly spoke against it, as she informed me, were soldiers disbanded upon pensions, the sextons of village churches, and ex-

cisemen. Belle had a craving desire to visit that country, and to wander with cart and little animal amongst its forests: when I would occasionally object, that she would be exposed to danger from strange and perverse customers, she said that she had not wandered the roads of England so long and alone, to be afraid of anything which might befall in America; and that she hoped, with God's favour, to be able to take her own part, and to give to perverse customers as good as they might bring. She had a dauntless heart, that same Belle. Such was the staple of Belle's conversation. As for mine, I would endeavour to entertain her with strange dreams of adventure, in which I figured in opaque forests, strangling wild beasts, or discovering and plundering the hoards of dragons; and sometimes I would narrate to her other things far more genuine—how I had tamed savage mares, wrestled with Satan, and had dealings with ferocious publishers. Belle had a kind heart, and would weep at the accounts I gave her of my early wrestlings with the dark Monarch. She would sigh, too, as I recounted the many slights and degradations I had received at the hands of ferocious publishers; but

she had the curiosity of a woman; and once, when I talked to her of the triumphs which I had achieved over unbroken mares, she lifted up her head and questioned me as to the secret of the virtue which I possessed over the aforesaid animals; whereupon I sternly reprimanded, and forthwith commanded her to repeat the Armenian numerals; and, on her demurring, I made use of words, to escape which she was glad to comply, saying the Armenian numerals from one to a hundred, which numerals, as a punishment for her curiosity, I made her repeat three times, loading her with the bitterest reproaches whenever she committed the slightest error, either in accent or pronunciation, which reproaches she appeared to bear with the greatest patience. And now I have given a very fair account of the manner in which Isopel Berners and myself passed our time in the dingle.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE LANDLORD. — RATHER TOO OLD. — WITHOUT A SHILLING. — REPUTATION. — A FORTNIGHT AGO. — LIQUIDS. — THE MAIN CHANCE. — RESPECTABILITY. — IRRATIONAL BEINGS. — PARLIAMENT COVE. — MY BREWER.

Amongst other excursions, I went several times to the public-house to which I introduced the reader in a former chapter. I had experienced such beneficial effects from the ale I had drunk on that occasion, that I wished to put its virtue to a frequent test; nor did the ale on subsequent trials belie the good opinion which I had at first formed of it. After each visit which I made to the public-house, I found my frame stronger, and my mind more cheerful than they had previously been. The landlord appeared at all times glad to see me, and insisted that I should sit within the bar, where, leaving his other guests to be attended to by a niece of his, who officiated as his housekeeper, he would sit beside me and talk of matters concerning

"the ring," indulging himself with a cigar and a glass of sherry, which he told me was his favourite wine, whilst I drank my ale. "I loves the conversation of all you coves of the ring," said he once, "which is natural, seeing as how I have fought in a ring myself. Ah, there is nothing like the ring; I wish I was not rather too old to go again into it. I often think I should like to have another rally—one more rally, and then—but there's a time for all things—youth will be served, every dog has his day, and mine has been a fine one—let me be content. After beating Tom of Hopton, there was not much more to be done in the way of reputation; I have long sat in my bar the wonder and glory of this here neighbourhood. I'm content, as far as reputation goes; I only wish money would come in a little faster; however, the next main of cocks will bring me in something handsome—comes off next Wednesday, at . . . . have ventured ten five pound notes — shouldn't say ventured either—run no risk at all, because why? I knows my birds." About ten days after this harangue I called again, at about three o'clock one afternoon. The landlord was seated on a bench by a table in the

common room, which was entirely empty; he was neither smoking nor drinking, but sat with his arms folded, and his head hanging down over his breast. At the sound of my step he looked up; "Ah," said he, "I am glad you are come, I was just thinking about you." "Thank you," said I; "it was very kind of you, especially at a time like this, when your mind must be full of your good fortune. Allow me to congratulate you on the sums of money you won by the main of cocks at . . . I hope you brought it all safe home." "Safe home!" said the landlord; "I brought myself safe home, and that was all; came home without a shilling, regularly done, cleaned out." "I am sorry for that," said I; "but after you had won the money, you ought to have been satisfied, and not risked it again—how did you lose it? I hope not by the pea and thimble." "Pea and thimble," said the landlord—"not I; those confounded cocks left me nothing to lose by the pea and thimble." "Dear me," said I; "I thought that you knew your birds." "Well, so I did," said the landlord; "I knew the birds to be good birds, and so they proved, and would have won if better birds had not been brought against

them, of which I knew nothing, and so do you see I am done, regularly done." "Well," said I, "don't be cast down; there is one thing of which the cocks by their misfortune cannot deprive you—your reputation; make the most of that, give up cock-fighting, and be content with the custom of your house, of which you will always have plenty, as long as you are the wonder and glory of the neighbourhood."

The landlord struck the table before him violently with his fist. "Confound my reputation!" said he. "No reputation that I have will be satisfaction to my brewer for the seventy pounds I owe him. Reputation won't pass for the current coin of this here realm; and let me tell you, that if it a'n't backed by some of it, it a'n't a bit better than rotten cabbage, as I have found. Only three weeks since I was, as I told you, the wonder and glory of the neighbourhood; and people used to come to look at me, and worship me; but as soon as it began to be whispered about that I owed money to the brewer, they presently left off all that kind of thing; and now, during the last three days, since the tale of my misfortune with the

cocks has got wind, almost everybody has left off coming to the house, and the few who does, merely comes to insult and flout me. It was only last night that fellow, Hunter, called me an old fool in my own kitchen here. He wouldn't have called me a fool a fortnight ago; 't was I called him fool then, and last night he called me old fool; what do you think of that?—the man that beat Tom of Hopton, to be called, not only a fool, but an old fool; and I hadn't heart, with one blow of this here fist into his face, to send his head ringing against the wall; for when a man's pocket is low, do you see, his heart a'n't much higher; but it is of no use talking, something must be done. I was thinking of you just as you came in, for you are just the person that can help me."

"If you mean," said I, "to ask me to lend you the money which you want, it will be to no purpose, as I have very little of my own, just enough for my own occasions; it is true, if you desired it, I would be your intercessor with the person to whom you owe the money, though I should hardly imagine that anything I could say—" "You are right there," said the landlord; "much the brewer would

care for anything you could say on my behalf—your going would be the very way to do me up entirely. A pretty opinion he would have of the state of my affairs if I were to send him such a 'cessor as you; and as for your lending me money, don't think I was ever fool enough to suppose either that you had any, or if you had that you would be fool enough to lend me any. No, no, the coves of the ring knows better; I have been in the ring myself, and knows what a fighting cove is, and though I was fool enough to back those birds, I was never quite fool enough to lend anybody money. What I am about to propose is something very different from going to my landlord, or lending any capital; something which, though it will put money into my pocket, will likewise put something handsome into your own. I want to get up a fight in this here neighbourhood, which would be sure to bring plenty of people to my house, for a week before and after it takes place; and as people can't come without drinking, I think I could, during one fortnight, get off for the brewer all the sour and unsaleable liquids he now has, which people would'nt drink at any other time, and by that means, do you see, liquidate my debt; then, by means of betting, making first

all right, do you see, I have no doubt that I could put something handsome into my pocket and yours, for I should wish you to be the fighting man, as I think I can depend upon you." "You really must excuse me," said I, "I have no wish to figure as a pugilist; besides, there is such a difference in our ages; you may be the stronger man of the two, and perhaps the hardest hitter, but I am in much better condition, am more active on my legs, so that I am almost sure I should have the advantage, for, as you very properly observed, 'Youth will be served.'" "Oh, I did'nt mean to fight," said the landlord, "I think I could beat you if I were to train a little; but in the fight I propose I looks more to the main chance than anything else. I question whether half so many people could be brought together if you were to fight with me as the person I have in view, or whether there would be half such opportunities for betting, for I am a man, do you see; the person I wants you to fight with is not a man, but the young woman you keeps company with."

"The young woman I keep company with," said I, "pray what do you mean?"

"We will go into the bar, and have something,"

said the landlord, getting up. "My niece is out, and there is no one in the house, so we can talk the matter over quietly." Thereupon I followed him into the bar, where, having drawn me a jug of ale, helped himself as usual to a glass of sherry, and lighted a cigar, he proceeded to explain himself farther. "What I wants, is to get up a fight between a man and a woman; there never has yet been such a thing in the ring, and the mere noise of the matter would bring thousands of people together, quite enough to drink out, for the thing should be close to my house, all the brewer's stock of liquids, both good and bad." "But," said I, "you were the other day boasting of the respectability of your house; do you think that a fight between a man and a woman close to your establishment would add to its respectability?" "Confound the respectability of my house," said the landlord; "will the respectability of my house pay the brewer, or keep the roof over my head? No, no! when respectability won't keep a man, do you see, the best thing is to let it go and wander. Only let me have my own way, and both the brewer, myself, and every one of us, will be satisfied. And then the betting—

what a deal we may make by the betting—and that we shall have all to ourselves, you, I, and the young woman; the brewer will have no hand in that. I can manage to raise ten pounds, and if by flashing that about I don't manage to make a hundred, call me horse." "But, suppose," said I, "the party should lose, on whom you sport your money, even as the birds did?" "We must first make all right," said the landlord, "as I told you before; the birds were irrational beings, and therefore couldn't come to an understanding with the others, as you and the young woman can. The birds fought fair; but I intend that you and the young woman should fight cross." "What do you mean by cross?" said I. "Come, come," said the landlord, "don't attempt to gammon me; you in the ring, and pretend not to know what fighting cross is! That won't do, my fine fellow; but as no one is near us, I will speak out. I intend that you and the young woman should understand one another, and agree beforehand which should be beat; and if you take my advice, you will determine between you that the young woman shall be beat, as I am sure that the odds will run high upon her, her character as a

fist-woman being spread far and wide, so that all the flats who think it will be all right will back her, as I myself would, if I thought it would be a fair thing." "Then," said I, "you would not have us fight fair?" "By no means," said the landlord, "because why? — I conceives that a cross is a certainty to those who are in it, whereas by the fair thing one may lose all he has." "But," said I, "you said the other day, that you liked the fair thing." "That was by way of gammon," said the landlord; "just, do you see, as a Parliament cove might say, speechifying from a barrel to a set of flats, whom he means to sell. Come, what do you think of the plan?"

"It is a very ingenious one," said I.

"A'n't it?" said the landlord. "The folks in this neighbourhood are beginning to call me old fool; but if they don't call me something else, when they sees me friends with the brewer, and money in my pocket, my name is not Catchpole. Come, drink your ale, and go home to the young gentlewoman."

"I am going," said I, rising from my seat, after finishing the remainder of the ale.

"Do you think she 'll have any objection?" said the landlord.

"To do what?" said I.

"Why, to fight cross."

"Yes, I do," said I.

"But you will do your best to persuade her?"

"No, I will not," said I.

"Are you fool enough to wish to fight fair?"

"No," said I, "I am wise enough to wish not to fight at all."

"And how's my brewer to be paid?" said the landlord.

"I really don't know," said I.

"I 'll change my religion," said the landlord.

CHAPTER XXVI.

ANOTHER VISIT.—A LA MARGUTTE.— CLEVER MAN.—NAPOLEON'S ESTIMATE.— ANOTHER STATUE.

One evening Belle and myself received another visit from the man in black. After a little conversation of not much importance, I asked him whether he would not take some refreshment, assuring him that I was now in possession of some very excellent Hollands, which, with a glass, a jug of water, and a lump of sugar, were heartily at his service; he accepted my offer, and Belle going with a jug to the spring, from which she was in the habit of procuring water for tea, speedily returned with it full of the clear, delicious water of which I have already spoken. Having placed the jug by the side of the man in black, she brought him a glass and spoon, and a tea-cup, the latter containing various lumps of snowy-white sugar: in the mean

time I had produced a bottle of the stronger liquid. The man in black helped himself to some water, and likewise to some Hollands, the proportion of water being about two-thirds; then adding a lump of sugar, he stirred the whole up, tasted it, and said that it was good.

"This is one of the good things of life," he added, after a short pause.

"What are the others?" I demanded.

"There is Malvoisia sack," said the man in black, "and partridge, and beccafico."

"And what do you say to high mass?" said I.

"High mass!" said the man in black; "however," he continued, after a pause, "I will be frank with you; I came to be so; I may have heard high mass on a time, and said it too; but as for any predilection for it, I assure you I have no more than for a long High Church sermon."

"You speak a la Margutte," said I.

"Margutte!" said the man in black, musingly, "Margutte!"

You have read Pulci, I suppose?" said I.

"Yes, yes," said the man in black, laughing; "I remember."

"He might be rendered into English," said I, "something in this style:—

> "'To which Margutte answered with a sneer,
> I like the blue no better than the black,
> My faith consists alone in savoury cheer,
> In roasted capons, and in potent sack;
> But above all, in famous gin and clear,
> Which often lays the Briton on his back,
> With lump of sugar, and with lympth from well,
> I drink it, and defy the fiends of hell.'"

"He! he! he!" said the man in black; "that is more than Mezzofante could have done for a stanza of Byron."

"A clever man," said I.

"Who?" said the man in black.

"Mezzofante di Bologna."

"He! he! he!" said the man in black; "now I know that you are not a Gypsy, at least a soothsayer; no soothsayer would have said that . . . ."

"Why," said I, "does he not understand five-and-twenty tongues?"

"O yes," said the man in black; "and five-and-twenty added to them; but, he! he! he! it was principally from him, who is certainly the greatest of Philologists, that I formed my opinion of the sect."

"You ought to speak of him with more respect,"

said I; "I have heard say that he has done good service to your See."

"O, yes," said the man in black; "he has done good service to our See, that is, in his way; when the neophytes of the propaganda are to be examined in the several tongues in which they are destined to preach, he is appointed to question them, the questions being first written down for him, or else, he! he! he!—Of course you know Napoleon's estimate of Mezzofante; he sent for the linguist from motives of curiosity, and after some discourse with him, told him that he might depart; then turning to some of his generals, he observed, 'Nous avons eu ici un exemple qu'un homme peut avoir beaucoup de paroles avec bien peu d'esprit.'"

"You are ungrateful to him," said I; "well, perhaps, when he is dead and gone you will do him justice."

"True," said the man in black; "when he is dead and gone, we intend to erect him a statue of wood, on the left-hand side of the door of the Vatican library."

"Of wood?" said I.

"He was the son of a carpenter, you know,"

said the man in black; the figure will be of wood, for no other reason, I assure you; he! he!"

"You should place another statue on the right."

"Perhaps we shall," said the man in black; "but we know of no one amongst the philologists of Italy, nor, indeed, of the other countries inhabited by the faithful, worthy to sit parallel in effigy with our illustrissimo; when, indeed, we have conquered these regions of the perfidious by bringing the inhabitants thereof to the true faith, I have no doubt that we shall be able to select one worthy to bear him company—one whose statue shall be placed on the right hand of the library, in testimony of our joy at his conversion; for, as you know, 'There is more joy,' &c."

"Wood?" said I.

"I hope not," said the man in black; "no, if I be consulted as to the material for the statue, I should strongly recommend bronze."

And when the man in black had said this, he emptied his second tumbler of its contents, and prepared himself another.

CHAPTER XXVII.

PREROGATIVE. — FEELING OF GRATITUDE.—A LONG HISTORY. — ALLITERATIVE STYLE.—ADVANTAGEOUS SPECIMEN.—JESUIT BENEFICE. —NOT SUFFICIENT. — QUEEN STORK'S TRAGEDY. —GOOD SENSE. — GRANDEUR AND GENTILITY. — IRONMONGER'S DAUGHTER. — CLAN MAC-SYCOPHANT.—LICK-SPITTLES. —A CURIOSITY.— NEWSPAPER EDITORS.—CHARLES THE SIMPLE.—HIGH-FLYING DITTY.—DISSENTERS.— LOWER CLASSES. — PRIESTLEY'S HOUSE. — SAXON ANCESTORS. — AUSTIN.—RENOVATING GLASS.—MONEY.—QUITE ORIGINAL.

"So you hope to bring these regions again beneath the banner of the Roman See?" said I; after the man in black had prepared the beverage, and tasted it.

"Hope!" said the man in black; "how can we fail? Is not the Church of these regions going to lose its prerogative?"

"Its prerogative?"

"Yes; those who should be the guardians of the religion of England are about to grant Papists emancipation, and to remove the disabilities from Dissenters, which will allow the Holy Father to play his own game in England."

On my inquiring how the Holy Father intended to play his game, the man in black gave me to under-

stand that he intended for the present to cover the land with temples, in which the religion of Protestants would be continually scoffed at and reviled.

On my observing that such behaviour would savour strongly of ingratitude, the man in black gave me to understand that if I entertained the idea that the See of Rome was ever influenced in its actions by any feeling of gratitude I was much mistaken, assuring me that if the See of Rome in any encounter should chance to be disarmed and its adversary, from a feeling of magnanimity, should restore the sword which had been knocked out of its hand, the See of Rome always endeavoured on the first opportunity to plunge the said sword into its adversary's bosom; conduct which the man in black seemed to think was very wise, and which he assured me had already enabled it to get rid of a great many troublesome adversaries, and would, he had no doubt, enable it to get rid of a great many more.

On my attempting to argue against the propriety of such behaviour, the man in black cut the matter short, by saying, that if one party was a fool he saw no reason why the other should imitate it in its folly.

After musing a little while, I told him that eman-

cipation had not yet passed through the legislature, and that perhaps it never would; reminding him that there was often many a slip between the cup and the lip; to which observation the man in black agreed, assuring me, however, that there was no doubt that emancipation would be carried, inasmuch as there was a very loud cry at present in the land—a cry of "tolerance," which had almost frightened the Government out of its wits; who, to get rid of the cry, was going to grant all that was asked in the way of toleration, instead of telling the people to "Hold their nonsense," and cutting them down, provided they continued bawling longer.

I questioned the man in black with respect to the origin of this cry; but he said, to trace it to its origin would require a long history; that, at any rate, such a cry was in existence, the chief raisers of it being certain of the nobility, called Whigs, who hoped by means of it to get into power, and to turn out certain ancient adversaries of theirs called Tories, who were for letting things remain in *statu quo;* that these Whigs were backed by a party amongst the people called Radicals, a specimen of whom I had seen in the public-house; a set of fellows who

were always in the habit of bawling against those in place; "and so," he added, "by means of these parties, and the hubbub which the Papists and other smaller sects are making, a general emancipation will be carried, and the Church of England humbled, which is the principal thing which the See of Rome cares for."

On my telling the man in black that I believed that, even among the high dignitaries of the English Church, there were many who wished to grant perfect freedom to religions of all descriptions, he said, he was aware that such was the fact, and that such a wish was anything but wise, inasmuch as, if they had any regard for the religion they professed, they ought to stand by it through thick and thin, proclaiming it to be the only true one, and denouncing all others, in an alliterative style, as dangerous and damnable; whereas, by their present conduct, they were bringing their religion into contempt with the people at large, who would never continue long attached to a Church, the ministers of which did not stand up for it, and likewise cause their own brethren, who had a clearer notion of things, to be ashamed of belonging to it. "I speak, advisedly," said he, in continuation, "there is one Platitude."

"And I hope there is only one," said I; "you surely would not adduce the likes and dislikes of that poor silly fellow as the criterions of the opinions of any party?"

"You know him," said the man in black, "nay, I heard you mention him in the public-house; the fellow is not very wise, I admit, but he has sense enough to know, that unless a Church can make people hold their tongues when it thinks fit, it is scarcely deserving the name of a Church; no, I think that the fellow is not such a very bad stick, and that upon the whole he is, or rather was, an advantageous specimen of the High Church English clergy, who, for the most part, so far from troubling their heads about persecuting people, only think of securing their tithes, eating their heavy dinners, puffing out their cheeks with importance on country justice benches, and occasionally exhibiting their conceited wives, hoyden daughters, and gawky sons at country balls, whereas Platitude . . . ."

"Stop," said I, "you said in the public-house that the Church of England was a persecuting Church, and here in the dingle you have confessed that one section of it is willing to grant perfect

freedom to the exercise of all religions, and the other only thinks of leading an easy life."

"Saying a thing in the public-house is a widely different thing from saying it in the dingle," said the man in black; "had the Church of England been a persecuting Church, it would not stand in the position in which it stands at present; it might, with its opportunities, have spread itself over the greater part of the world. I was about to observe that, instead of practising the indolent habits of his High Church brethren, Platitude would be working for his money, preaching the proper use of fire and faggot, or rather of the halter and the whipping-post, encouraging mobs to attack the houses of Dissenters, employing spies to collect the scandal of neighbourhoods, in order that he might use it for sacerdotal purposes, and, in fact, endeavouring to turn an English parish into something like a Jesuit benefice in the south of France."

"He tried that game," said I, "and the parish said 'Pooh, pooh,' and, for the most part, went over to the Dissenters."

"Very true," said the man in black, taking a sip at his glass, "but why were the Dissenters allowed

to preach? why were they not beaten on the lips till they spat out blood, with a dislodged tooth or two? Why, but because the authority of the Church of England has, by its own fault, become so circumscribed, that Mr. Platitude was not able to send a host of beadles and sbirri to their chapel to bring them to reason, on which account Mr. Platitude is very properly ashamed of his Church, and is thinking of uniting himself with one which possesses more vigour and authority."

"It may have vigour and authority," said I, "in foreign lands, but in these kingdoms the day for practising its atrocities is gone by. It is at present almost below contempt, and is obliged to sue for grace in formâ pauperis."

"Very true," said the man in black; "but let it once obtain emancipation, and it will cast its slough, put on its fine clothes, and make converts by thousands. 'What a fine Church!' they 'll say; 'with what authority it speaks! no doubts, no hesitation, no sticking at trifles. What a contrast to the sleepy English Church!' They'll go over to it by millions, till it preponderates here over every other, when it will of course be voted the dominant one; and then—and then . . . . . " and here the man in

black drank a considerable quantity of gin and water.

"What then?" said I.

"What then?" said the man in black, "why she will be true to herself. Let Dissenters, whether they be Church of England, as perhaps they may still call themselves, Methodist, or Presbyterian, presume to grumble, and there shall be bruising of lips in pulpits, tying up to whipping-posts, cutting off ears and noses — he! he! the farce of King Log has been acted long enough; the time for Queen Stork's tragedy is drawing nigh;" and the man in black sipped his gin and water in a very exulting manner.

"And this is the Church which, according to your assertion in the public-house, never persecutes?"

"I have already given you an answer," said the man in black. "With respect to the matter of the public-house, it is one of the happy privileges of those who belong to my Church to deny in the public-house what they admit in the dingle; we have high warranty for such double speaking. Did not the foundation stone of our Church, Saint

Peter, deny in the public-house what he had previously professed in the valley?"

"And do you think," said I, "that the people of England, who have shown aversion to anything in the shape of intolerance, will permit such barbarities as you have described?"

"Let them become Papists," said the man in black; "only let the majority become Papists, and you will see."

"They will never become so," said I; "the good sense of the people of England will never permit them to commit such an absurdity."

"The good sense of the people of England!" said the man in black, filling himself another glass.

"Yes," said I, "the good sense of not only the upper, but the middle and lower classes."

"And of what description of people are the upper class?" said the man in black, putting a lump of sugar into his gin and water.

"Very fine people," said I, "monstrously fine people; so, at least, they are generally believed to be."

"He! he!" said the man in black; "only those

think them so who don't know them. The male part of the upper class are in youth a set of heartless profligates; in old age, a parcel of poor, shaking, nervous paillards. The female part, worthy to be the sisters and wives of such wretches—unmarried, full of cold vice, kept under by vanity and ambition, but which, after marriage, they seek not to restrain; in old age, abandoned to vapours and horrors; do you think that such beings will afford any obstacle to the progress of the Church in these regions, as soon as her movements are unfettered?"

"I cannot give an opinion; I know nothing of them, except from a distance. But what think you of the middle classes?"

"Their chief characteristic," said the man in black, "is a rage for grandeur and gentility; and that same rage makes us quite sure of them in the long run. Everything that's lofty meets their unqualified approbation; whilst everything humble, or, as they call it, 'low,' is scouted by them. They begin to have a vague idea that the religion which they have hitherto professed is low; at any rate, that it is not the religion of the mighty ones of the

earth, of the great kings and emperors whose shoes they have a vast inclination to kiss, nor was used by the grand personages of whom they have read in their novels and romances, their Ivanhoes, their Marmions, and their Ladies of the Lake."

"Do you think that the writings of Scott have had any influence in modifying their religious opinions?"

"Most certainly I do," said the man in black. "The writings of that man have made them greater fools than they were before. All their conversation now is about gallant knights, princesses, and cavaliers, with which his pages are stuffed—all of whom were Papists, or very high Church, which is nearly the same thing; and they are beginning to think that the religion of such nice sweet-scented gentry must be something very superfine. Why, I know at Birmingham the daughter of an ironmonger, who screeches to the piano the Lady of the Lake's hymn to the Virgin Mary, always weeps when Mary Queen of Scots is mentioned, and fasts on the anniversary of the death of that very wise martyr, Charles the First. Why, I would engage to convert such an idiot to popery in a week, were it

worth my trouble. O Cavalière Gualtiero avete fatto molto in favore della Santa Sede!"

"If he has," said I, "he has done it unwittingly; I never heard before that he was a favourer of the popish delusion."

"Only in theory," said the man in black. "Trust any of the clan Mac-Sycophant for interfering openly and boldly in favour of any cause on which the sun does not shine benignantly. Popery is at present, as you say, suing for grace in these regions in formâ pauperis; but let royalty once take it up, let old gouty George once patronize it, and I would consent to drink puddle-water if, the very next time the canny Scot was admitted to the royal symposium, he did not say, 'By my faith, yere Majesty, I have always thought, at the bottom of my heart, that popery, as ill scrapit tongues ca' it, was a very grand religion; I shall be proud to follow your Majesty's example in adopting it.'"

"I doubt not," said I, "that both gouty George and his devoted servant will be mouldering in their tombs long before Royalty in England thinks about adopting popery."

"We can wait," said the man in black; "in these

days of rampant gentility, there will be no want of kings nor of Scots about them."

"But not Walters," said I.

"Our work has been already tolerably well done by one," said the man in black; "but if we wanted literature, we should never lack in these regions hosts of literary men of some kind or other to eulogize us, provided our religion were in the fashion, and our popish nobles chose—and they always do our bidding—to admit the canaille to their tables—their kitchen tables. As for literature in general," said he, "the Santa Sede is not particularly partial to it, it may be employed both ways. In Italy, in particular, it has discovered that literary men are not always disposed to be lick-spittles."

"For example, Dante," said I.

"Yes," said the man in black, "a dangerous personage; that poem of his cuts both ways; and then there was Pulci, that Morgante of his cuts both ways, or rather one way, and that sheer against us; and then there was Aretino, who dealt so hard with the poveri frati; all writers, at least Italian ones, are not lick-spittles. And then in Spain,—'t is true, Lope de Vega and Calderon were

most inordinate lick-spittles; the Principe Constante of the last is a curiosity in its way; and then the Mary Stuart of Lope; I think I shall recommend the perusal of that work to the Birmingham ironmonger's daughter—she has been lately thinking of adding 'a slight knowledge of the magneeficent language of the Peninsula' to the rest of her accomplishments, he! he! he! But then there was Cervantes, starving, but straight; he deals us some hard knocks in that second part of his Quixote. Then there were some of the writers of the picaresque novels. No, all literary men are not lick-spittles, whether in Italy or Spain, or, indeed, upon the Continent; it is only in England that all . . . ."

"Come," said I, "mind what you are about to say of English literary men."

"Why should I mind?" said the man in black, "there are no literary men here. I have heard of literary men living in garrets, but not in dingles, whatever philologists may do; I may, therefore, speak out freely. It is only in England that literary men are invariably lick-spittles; on which account, perhaps, they are so despised, even by

those who benefit by their dirty services. Look at your fashionable novel writers, he! he!—and, above all, at your newspaper editors, ho! ho!"

"You will, of course, except the editors of the . . . . from your censure of the last class?" said I.

"Them!" said the man in black; "why they might serve as models in the dirty trade to all the rest who practise it. See how they bepraise their patrons, the grand Whig nobility, who hope, by raising the cry of liberalism, and by putting themselves at the head of the populace, to come into power shortly. I don't wish to be hard, at present, upon those Whigs," he continued, "for they are playing our game; but a time will come when, not wanting them, we will kick them to a considerable distance: and then, when toleration is no longer the cry, and the Whigs are no longer backed by the populace, see whether the editors of the . . . . will stand by them; they will prove themselves as expert lick-spittles of despotism as of liberalism. Don't think they will always bespatter the Tories and Austria."

"Well," said I, "I am sorry to find that you entertain so low an opinion of the spirit of English

literary men; we will now return, if you please, to the subject of the middle classes; I think your strictures upon them in general are rather too sweeping — they are not altogether the foolish people which you have described. Look, for example, at that very powerful and numerous body the Dissenters, the descendants of those sturdy Patriots who hurled Charles the Simple from his throne."

"There are some sturdy fellows amongst them, I do not deny," said the man in black, "especially amongst the preachers, clever withal—two or three of that class nearly drove Mr. Platitude mad, as perhaps you are aware, but they are not very numerous; and the old sturdy sort of preachers are fast dropping off, and, as we observe with pleasure, are generally succeeded by frothy coxcombs, whom it would not be very difficult to gain over. But what we most rely upon as an instrument to bring the Dissenters over to us is the mania for gentility, which amongst them has of late become as great, and more ridiculous than amongst the middle classes belonging to the Church of England. All the plain and simple fashions of their forefathers

they are either about to abandon, or have already done so. Look at the most part of their chapels—no longer modest brick edifices, situated in quiet and retired streets, but lunatic-looking erections, in what the simpletons call the modern Gothic taste, of Portland stone, with a cross upon the top, and the site generally the most conspicuous that can be found. And look at the manner in which they educate their children—I mean those that are wealthy. They do not even wish them to be Dissenters—'the sweet dears shall enjoy the advantages of good society, of which their parents were debarred.' So the girls are sent to tip-top boarding schools, where amongst other trash they read 'Rokeby,' and are taught to sing snatches from that high-flying ditty, the 'Cavalier—'

> 'Would you match the base Skippon, and Massey, and Brown,
> With the barons of England, who fight for the crown?' —

he! he! their own names. Whilst the lads are sent to those hot-beds of pride and folly—colleges, whence they return with a greater contempt for everything 'low,' and especially for their own pedigree, than they went with. I tell you, friend, the children of Dissenters, if not their parents, are

going over to the Church, as you call it, and the Church is going over to Rome."

"I do not see the justice of that latter assertion at all," said I; "some of the Dissenters' children may be coming over to the Church of England, and yet the Church of England be very far from going over to Rome."

"In the high road for it, I assure you," said the man in black; "part of it is going to abandon, the rest to lose their prerogative, and when a Church no longer retains its prerogative, it speedily loses its own respect, and that of others."

"Well," said I, "if the higher classes have all the vices and follies which you represent, on which point I can say nothing, as I have never mixed with them; and even supposing the middle classes are the foolish beings you would fain make them, and which I do not believe them as a body to be, you would still find some resistance amongst the lower classes: I have a considerable respect for their good sense and independence of character; but pray let me hear your opinion of them."

"As for the lower classes," said the man in black, "I believe them to be the most brutal wretches in the world, the most addicted to foul

feeding, foul language, and foul vices of every kind; wretches who have neither love for country, religion, nor anything save their own vile selves. You surely do not think that they would oppose a change of religion! why, there is not one of them but would hurrah for the Pope, or Mahomet, for the sake of a hearty gorge and a drunken bout, like those which they are treated with at election contests."

"Has your church any followers amongst them?" said I.

"Wherever there happens to be a Romish family of considerable possessions," said the man in black, "our church is sure to have followers of the lower class, who have come over in the hope of getting something in the shape of dole or donation. As, however, the Romish is not yet the dominant religion, and the clergy of the English establishment have some patronage to bestow, the churches are not quite deserted by the lower classes; yet, were the Romish to become the established religion, they would, to a certainty, all go over to it; you can scarcely imagine what a self-interested set they are —for example, the landlord of that public-house in which I first met you, having lost a sum of money

upon a cock-fight, and his affairs in consequence being in a bad condition, is on the eve of coming over to us, in the hope that two old Popish females of property, whom I confess, will advance a sum of money to set him up again in the world."

"And what could have put such an idea into the poor fellow's head?" said I.

"Oh! he and I have had some conversation upon the state of his affairs," said the man in black; "I think he might make a rather useful convert in these parts, provided things take a certain turn, as they doubtless will. It is no bad thing to have a fighting fellow, who keeps a public-house, belonging to one's religion. He has been occasionally employed as a bully at elections by the Tory party, and he may serve us in the same capacity. The fellow comes of a good stock; I heard him say that his father headed the high Church mob, who sacked and burnt Priestley's house at Birmingham, towards the end of the last century."

"A disgraceful affair," said I.

"What do you mean by a disgraceful affair?" said the man in black. "I assure you that nothing has occurred for the last fifty years which has given the high Church party so much credit in the eyes of

Rome as that,—we did not imagine that the fellows had so much energy. Had they followed up that affair by twenty others of a similar kind, they would by this time have had everything in their own power; but they did not, and, as a necessary consequence, they are reduced to almost nothing."

"I suppose," said I, "that your Church would have acted very differently in its place."

"It has always done so," said the man in black, coolly sipping. "Our Church has always armed the brute population against the genius and intellect of a country, provided that same intellect and genius were not willing to become its instruments and eulogists; and provided we once obtain a firm hold here again, we would not fail to do so. We would occasionally stuff the beastly rabble with horseflesh and bitter ale, and then halloo them on against all those who were obnoxious to us."

"Horseflesh and bitter ale!" I replied.

"Yes," said the man in black; "horseflesh and bitter ale—the favourite delicacies of their Saxon ancestors, who were always ready to do our bidding after a liberal allowance of such cheer. There is a tradition in our Church, that before the Northum-

brian rabble, at the instigation of Austin, attacked and massacred the presbyterian monks of Bangor, they had been allowed a good gorge of horseflesh and bitter ale. He! he! he!" continued the man in black, "what a fine spectacle to see such a mob, headed by a fellow like our friend, the landlord, sack the house of another Priestley!"

"Then you don't deny that we have had a Priestley," said I, "and admit the possibility of our having another? You were lately observing that all English literary men were sycophants?"

"Lick-spittles," said the man in black; "yes, I admit that you have had a Priestley, but he was a Dissenter of the old class; you have had him, and perhaps may have another."

"Perhaps we may," said I. "But with respect to the lower classes, have you mixed much with them?"

"I have mixed with all classes," said the man in black, "and with the lower not less than the upper and middle; they are much as I have described them; and of the three, the lower are the worst. I never knew one of them that possessed the slightest principle, no, not . . . . It is true, there was one fellow whom I once met, who . . . .; but it is a long story, and the affair happened abroad."—

"I ought to know something of the English people," he continued, after a moment's pause; "I have been many years amongst them, labouring in the cause of the Church."

"Your See must have had great confidence in your powers, when it selected you to labour for it in these parts," said I.

"They chose me," said the man in black, "principally because, being of British extraction and education, I could speak the English language and bear a glass of something strong. It is the opinion of my See, that it would hardly do to send a missionary into a country like this who is not well versed in English—a country where, they think, so far from understanding any language besides his own, scarcely one individual in ten speaks his own intelligibly; or an ascetic person where, as they say, high and low, male and female, are, at some period of their lives, fond of a renovating glass, as it is styled—in other words, of tippling."

"Your See appears to entertain a very strange opinion of the English," said I.

"Not altogether an unjust one," said the man in black, lifting the glass to his mouth.

"Well," said I, "it is certainly very kind on its part to wish to bring back such a set of beings beneath its wing."

"Why, as to the kindness of my See," said the man in black, "I have not much to say; my See has generally in what it does a tolerably good motive; these heretics possess in plenty what my See has a great hankering for, and can turn to a good account—money!"

"The founder of the Christian religion cared nothing for money," said I.

"What have we to do with what the founder of the Christian religion cared for?" said the man in black. "How could our temples be built, and our priests supported without money? But you are unwise to reproach us with a desire of obtaining money; you forget that your own Church, if the Church of England be your own Church, as I suppose it is, from the willingness which you displayed in the public-house to fight for it, is equally avaricious; look at your greedy Bishops, and your corpulent Rectors—do they imitate Christ in his disregard for money? You might as well tell me that they imitate Christ in his meekness and humility."

"Well," said I, "whatever their faults may be, you can't say that they go to Rome for money."

The man in black made no direct answer, but appeared by the motion of his lips to be repeating something to himself.

"I see your glass is again empty," said I; "perhaps you will replenish it?"

The man in black arose from his seat, adjusted his habiliments, which were rather in disorder, and placed upon his head his hat, which he had laid aside; then, looking at me, who was still lying on the ground, he said—"I might, perhaps, take another glass, though I believe I have had quite as much as I can well bear; but I do not wish to hear you utter anything more this evening, after that last observation of yours—it is quite original; I will meditate upon it on my pillow this night, after having said an ave and a pater—go to Rome for money!" He then made Belle a low bow, slightly motioned to me with his hand as if bidding farewell, and then left the dingle with rather uneven steps.

"Go to Rome for money," I heard him say as he ascended the winding path, "he! he! he! Go to Rome for money, ho! ho! ho!"

CHAPTER XXVIII.

WOODED RETREAT. — FRESH SHOES. — WOOD FIRE. — ASH, WHEN GREEN.—QUEEN OF CHINA.—CLEVEREST PEOPLE.—DECLENSIONS — ARMENIAN.—THUNDER.—DEEP OLIVE.—WHAT DO YOU MEAN?—KOUL ADONAI.—THE THICK BUSHES.—WOOD PIGEON.—OLD GÖTHE.

NEARLY three days elapsed without anything of particular moment occurring. Belle drove the little cart containing her merchandise about the neighbourhood, returning to the dingle towards the evening. As for myself, I kept within my wooded retreat, working during the periods of her absence leisurely at my forge. Having observed that the quadruped which my companion drove was as much in need of shoes as my own had been some time previously, I had determined to provide it with a set, and during the aforesaid periods occupied myself in preparing them. As I was employed three mornings and afternoons about them, I am sure that the reader will agree that I worked leisurely, or rather, lazily. On the third day Belle arrived

somewhat later than usual; I was lying on my back at the bottom of the dingle, employed in tossing up the shoes which I had produced, and catching them as they fell—some being always in the air mounting or descending, somewhat after the fashion of the waters of a fountain.

"Why have you been absent so long?" said I to Belle, "it must be long past four by the day."

"I have been almost killed by the heat," said Belle; "I was never out in a more sultry day—the poor donkey, too, could scarcely move along."

"He shall have fresh shoes," said I, continuing my exercise, "here they are quite ready; to-morrow I will tack them on."

"And why are you playing with them in that manner?" said Belle.

"Partly in triumph at having made them, and partly to show that I can do something besides making them; it is not every one who, after having made a set of horse-shoes, can keep them going up and down in the air, without letting one fall."

"One has now fallen on your chin," said Belle.

"And another on my cheek," said I, getting up;

"it is time to discontinue the game, for the last shoe drew blood."

Belle went to her own little encampment; and as for myself, after having flung the donkey's shoes into my tent, I put some fresh wood on the fire, which was nearly out, and hung the kettle over it. I then issued forth from the dingle, and strolled round the wood that surrounded it; for a long time I was busied in meditation, looking at the ground, striking with my foot, half unconsciously, the tufts of grass and thistles that I met in my way. After some time, I lifted up my eyes to the sky, at first vacantly, and then with more attention, turning my head in all directions for a minute or two; after which I returned to the dingle. Isopel was seated near the fire, over which the kettle was now hung; she had changed her dress—no signs of the dust and fatigue of her late excursion remained; she had just added to the fire a small billet of wood, two or three of which I had left beside it; the fire cracked, and a sweet odour filled the dingle.

"I am fond of sitting by a wood fire," said Belle, "when abroad, whether it be hot or cold; I love to see the flames dart out of the

wood; but what kind is this, and where did you get it?"

"It is ash," said I, "green ash. Somewhat less than a week ago, whilst I was wandering along the road by the side of a wood, I came to a place where some peasants were engaged in cutting up and clearing away a confused mass of fallen timber: a mighty aged oak had given way the night before, and in its fall had shivered some smaller trees; the upper part of the oak, and the fragments of the rest, lay across the road. I purchased, for a trifle, a bundle or two, and the wood on the fire is part of it—ash, green ash."

"That makes good the old rhyme," said Belle, "which I have heard sung by the old women in the great house:—

"'Ash, when green,
Is fire for a queen.'"

"And on fairer form of queen, ash fire never shone," said I, "than on thine, O beauteous queen of the dingle."

"I am half disposed to be angry with you, young man," said Belle.

"And why not entirely?" said I.

Belle made no reply.

"Shall I tell you?" I demanded. "You had no objection to the first part of the speech, but you did not like being called queen of the dingle. Well, if I had the power, I would make you queen of something better than the dingle—Queen of China. Come, let us have tea."

"Something less would content me," said Belle, sighing, as she rose to prepare our evening meal.

So we took tea together, Belle and I. "How delicious tea is after a hot summer's day, and a long walk," said she.

"I dare say it is most refreshing then," said I; "but I have heard people say that they most enjoy it on a cold winter's night, when the kettle is hissing on the fire, and their children playing on the hearth."

Belle sighed. "Where does tea come from?" she presently demanded.

"From China," said I; "I just now mentioned it, and the mention of it put me in mind of tea."

"What kind of country is China?"

"I know very little about it; all I know is, that it is a very large country far to the East, but scarcely large enough to contain its inhabitants, who are so numerous, that though China does not cover one-ninth part of the world, its inhabitants amount to one-third of the population of the world."

"And do they talk as we do?"

"O no! I know nothing of their language; but I have heard that it is quite different from all others, and so difficult that none but the cleverest people amongst foreigners can master it, on which account, perhaps, only the French pretend to know anything about it."

"Are the French so very clever, then?" said Belle.

"They say there are no people like them, at least in Europe. But talking of Chinese reminds me that I have not for some time past given you a lesson in Armenian. The word for tea in Armenian is—by the by, what is the Armenian word for tea?"

"That's your affair, not mine," said Belle; "it seems hard that the master should ask the scholar."

"Well," said I 'whatever the word may be in

Armenian, it is a noun; and as we have never yet declined an Armenian noun together, we may as well take this opportunity of declining one. Belle, there are ten declensions in Armenian!"

"What's a declension?"

"The way of declining a noun."

"Then, in the civilest way imaginable, I decline the noun. Is that a declension?"

"You should never play on words; to do so is low, vulgar, smelling of the pothouse, the workhouse. Belle, I insist on your declining an Armenian noun."

"I have done so already," said Belle.

"If you go on in this way," said I, "I shall decline taking any more tea with you. Will you decline an Armenian noun?"

"I don't like the language," said Belle. "If you must teach me languages, why not teach me French or Chinese?"

"I know nothing of Chinese; and as for French, none but a Frenchman is clever enough to speak it —to say nothing of teaching; no, we will stick to Armenian, unless, indeed, you would prefer Welsh!"

"Welsh, I have heard, is vulgar," said Belle; "so, if I must learn one of the two, I will prefer Armenian, which I never heard of till you mentioned it to me; though, of the two, I really think Welsh sounds best."

"The Armenian noun," said I, "which I propose for your declension this night, is ———, which signifieth Master."

"I neither like the word nor the sound," said Belle.

"I can't help that," said I; "it is the word I choose: Master, with all its variations, being the first noun the sound of which I would have you learn from my lips. Come, let us begin—

"A master. Of a master, &c. Repeat—"

"I am not much used to say the word," said Belle, "but to oblige you I will decline it as you wish;" and thereupon Belle declined Master in Armenian.

"You have declined the noun very well," said I; "that is in the singular number; we will now go to the plural."

"What is the plural?" said Belle

"That which implies more than one, for example, Masters; you shall now go through masters in Armenian."

"Never," said Belle, "never; it is bad to have one master, but more I would never bear, whether in Armenian or English."

"You do not understand," said I; "I merely want you to decline Masters in Armenian."

"I do decline them; I will have nothing to do with them, nor with master either; I was wrong to . . . . What sound is that?"

"I did not hear it, but I dare say it is thunder; in Armenian . . . ."

"Never mind what it is in Armenian; but why do you think it is thunder?"

"Ere I returned from my stroll, I looked up into the heavens, and by their appearance I judged that a storm was nigh at hand."

"And why did you not tell me so?"

"You never asked me about the state of the atmosphere, and I am not in the habit of giving my opinion to people on any subject, unless questioned. But, setting that aside, can you blame me for not troubling you with forebodings about storm

and tempest, which might have prevented the pleasure you promised yourself in drinking tea, or perhaps a lesson in Armenian, though you pretend to dislike the latter."

"My dislike is not pretended," said Belle; "I hate the sound of it, but I love my tea, and it was kind of you not to wish to cast a cloud over my little pleasures; the thunder came quite time enough to interrupt it without being anticipated—there is another peal—I will clear away, and see that my tent is in a condition to resist the storm; and I think you had better bestir yourself."

Isopel departed, and I remained seated on my stone, as nothing belonging to myself required any particular attention; in about a quarter of an hour she returned, and seated herself upon her stool.

"How dark the place is become since I left you," said she; "just as if night were just at hand."

"Look up at the sky," said I; "and you will not wonder; it is all of a deep olive. The wind is beginning to rise; hark how it moans among the branches, and see how their tops are bending; it brings dust on its wings—I felt some fall on my face; and what is this, a drop of rain?"

"We shall have plenty anon," said Belle; "do you hear? it already begins to hiss upon the embers; that fire of ours will soon be extinguished."

"It is not probable that we shall want it," said I, "but we had better seek shelter: let us go into my tent."

"Go in," said Belle, "but you go in alone; as for me, I will seek my own."

"You are right," said I, "to be afraid of me; I have taught you to decline master in Armenian."

"You almost tempt me," said Belle, "to make you decline mistress in English."

"To make matters short," said I, "I decline a mistress."

"What do you mean?" said Belle, angrily.

"I have merely done what you wished me," said I, "and in your own style; there is no other way of declining anything in English, for in English there are no declensions."

"The rain is increasing," said Belle.

"It is so," said I; "I shall go to my tent; you may come if you please; I do assure you I am not afraid of you."

"Nor I of you," said Belle; "so I will come. Why should I be afraid? I can take my own part; that is . . . ."

We went into the tent and sat down, and now the rain began to pour with vehemence. "I hope we shall not be flooded in this hollow," said I to Belle. "There is no fear of that," said Belle; the wandering people, amongst other names, call it the dry hollow. I believe there is a passage somewhere or other by which the wet is carried off. There must be a cloud right above us, it is so dark. Oh! what a flash!"

"And what a peal," said I; "that is what the Hebrews call Koul Adonai—the voice of the Lord. Are you afraid?"

"No," said Belle, "I rather like to hear it."

"You are right," said I, "I am fond of the sound of thunder myself. There is nothing like it; Koul Adonai behadar: the voice of the Lord is a glorious voice, as the prayer-book version hath it."

"There is something awful in it," said Belle; "and then the lightning—the whole dingle is now in a blaze."

"'The voice of the Lord maketh the hinds to calve, and discovereth the thick bushes.' As you say, there is something awful in thunder."

"There are all kinds of noises above us," said Belle; "surely I heard the crashing of a tree?"

"'The voice of the Lord breaketh the cedar trees,'" said I, "but what you hear is caused by a convulsion of the air; during a thunder-storm there are occasionally all kinds of aërial noises. Ab Gwilym, who, next to King David, has best described a thunder-storm, speaks of these aërial noises in the following manner:—

'Astonied now I stand at strains,
As of ten thousand clanking chains;
And once, methought, that overthrown,
The welkin's oaks came whelming down;
Upon my head up starts my hair:
Why hunt abroad the hounds of air?
What cursed hag is screeching high,
Whilst crash goes all her crockery?'

You would hardly believe, Belle, that though I offered at least ten thousand lines nearly as good as those to the booksellers in London, the simpletons were so blind to their interest as to refuse purchasing them!"

"I don't wonder at it," said Belle, "especially if such dreadful expressions frequently occur as that towards the end;—surely that was the crash of a tree?"

"Ah!" said I, "there falls the cedar tree—I mean the sallow; one of the tall trees on the outside of the dingle has been snapped short."

"What a pity," said Belle, "that the fine old oak, which you saw the peasants cutting up, gave way the other night, when scarcely a breath of air was stirring; how much better to have fallen in a storm like this, the fiercest I remember."

"I don't think so," said I; "after braving a thousand tempests, it was meeter for it to fall of itself than to be vanquished at last. But to return to Ab Gwilym's poetry: he was above culling dainty words, and spoke boldly his mind on all subjects. Enraged with the thunder for parting him and Morfydd, he says, at the conclusion of his ode,

> 'My curse, O Thunder, cling to thee,
> For parting my dear pearl and me!'"

"You and I shall part, that is, I shall go to my tent, if you persist in repeating from him. The man

must have been a savage. A poor wood-pigeon has fallen dead."

"Yes," said I, "there he lies, just outside the tent; often have I listened to his note when alone in this wilderness. So you do not like Ab Gwilym; what say you to old Göthe:—

'Mist shrouds the night, and rack;
Hear, in the woods, what an awful crack!
Wildly the owls are flitting,
Hark to the pillars splitting
Of palaces verdant ever,
The branches quiver and sever,
The mighty stems are creaking,
The poor roots breaking and shrieking,
In wild mixt ruin down dashing,
O'er one another they 're crashing;
Whilst 'midst the rocks so hoary,
Whirlwinds hurry and worry.
Hear'st not, sister—

"Hark!" said Belle, "hark!"

'Hear'st not, sister, a chorus
Of voices ——?"

"No," said Belle, "but I hear a voice."

CHAPTER XXIX.

A SHOUT.—A FIRE-BALL.—SEE TO THE HORSES.—PASSING AWAY.—GAP IN THE HEDGE.—ON THREE WHEELS.—WHY DO YOU STOP?—NO CRAVEN HEART.—THE CORDIAL.—ACROSS THE COUNTRY.—SMALL BAGS.

I LISTENED attentively, but I could hear nothing but the loud clashing of branches, the pattering of rain, and the muttered growl of thunder. I was about to tell Belle that she must have been mistaken, when I heard a shout—indistinct, it is true, owing to the noises aforesaid—from some part of the field above the dingle. "I will soon see what's the matter," said I to Belle, starting up. "I will go, too," said the girl. "Stay where you are," said I; "if I need you, I will call;" and, without waiting for any answer, I hurried to the mouth of the dingle. I was about a few yards only from the top of the ascent, when I beheld a blaze of light, from whence I knew not; the next moment there was a loud crash, and I appeared involved in a

cloud of sulphurous smoke. "Lord have mercy upon us!" I heard a voice say, and methought I heard the plunging and struggling of horses. I had stopped short on hearing the crash, for I was half stunned; but I now hurried forward, and in a moment stood upon the plain. Here I was instantly aware of the cause of the crash and the smoke. One of those balls, generally called fire-balls, had fallen from the clouds, and was burning on the plain at a short distance; and the voice which I had heard, and the plunging, were as easily accounted for. Near the left-hand corner of the grove which surrounded the dingle, and about ten yards from the fire-ball, I perceived a chaise, with a postillion on the box, who was making efforts, apparently useless, to control his horses, which were kicking and plunging in the highest degree of excitement. I instantly ran towards the chaise, in order to offer what help was in my power. "Help me," said the poor fellow, as I drew nigh; but before I could reach the horses, they had turned rapidly round, one of the fore-wheels flew from its axle-tree, the chaise was overset, and the postillion flung violently from his

seat upon the field. The horses now became more furious than before, kicking desperately, and endeavouring to disengage themselves from the fallen chaise. As I was hesitating whether to run to the assistance of the postillion or endeavour to disengage the animals, I heard the voice of Belle exclaiming, "See to the horses, I will look after the man." She had, it seems, been alarmed by the crash which accompanied the fire-bolt, and had hurried up to learn the cause. I forthwith seized the horses by the heads, and used all the means I possessed to soothe and pacify them, employing every gentle modulation of which my voice was capable. Belle, in the meantime, had raised up the man, who was much stunned by his fall; but, presently recovering his recollection to a certain degree, he came limping to me, holding his hand to his right thigh. "The first thing that must now be done," said I, "is to free these horses from the traces; can you undertake to do so?" "I think I can," said the man, looking at me somewhat stupidly. "I will help," said Belle, and without loss of time laid hold of one of the traces. The man, after a short pause, also set to work, and in a

few minutes the horses were extricated. "Now," said I to the man, "what is next to be done?" "I don't know," said he; "indeed, I scarcely know anything; I have been so frightened by this horrible storm, and so shaken by my fall." "I think," said I, "that the storm is passing away, so cast your fears away too; and as for your fall, you must bear it as lightly as you can. I will tie the horses amongst those trees, and then we will all betake us to the hollow below." "And what's to become of my chaise?" said the postillion, looking ruefully on the fallen vehicle. "Let us leave the chaise for the present," said I; "we can be of no use to it." "I don't like to leave my chaise lying on the ground in this weather," said the man; "I love my chaise, and him whom it belongs to." "You are quite right to be fond of yourself," said I, "on which account I advise you to seek shelter from the rain as soon as possible." "I was not talking of myself," said the man, "but my master, to whom the chaise belongs." "I thought you called the chaise yours," said I. "That's my way of speaking," said the man; "but the chaise is my master's, and a better master does not live. Don't you think

we could manage to raise up the chaise?" "And what is to become of the horses?" said I. "I love my horses well enough," said the man; "but they will take less harm than the chaise. We two can never lift up that chaise." "But we three can," said Belle; "at least, I think so; and I know where to find two poles which will assist us." "You had better go to the tent," said I, "you will be wet through." "I care not for a little wetting," said Belle; "moreover, I have more gowns than one—see you after the horses." Thereupon, I led the horses past the mouth of the dingle, to a place where a gap in the hedge afforded admission to the copse or plantation on the southern side. Forcing them through the gap, I led them to a spot amidst the trees, which I deemed would afford them the most convenient place for standing; then, darting down into the dingle, I brought up a rope, and also the halter of my own nag, and with these fastened them each to a separate tree in the best manner I could. This done, I returned to the chaise and the postillion. In a minute or two Belle arrived with two poles, which, it seems, had long been lying, overgrown with brushwood, in a ditch or

hollow behind the plantation. With these both she and I set to work in endeavouring to raise the fallen chaise from the ground.

We experienced considerable difficulty in this undertaking; at length, with the assistance of the postillion, we saw our efforts crowned with success —the chaise was lifted up, and stood upright on three wheels.

"We may leave it here in safety," said I, "for it will hardly move away on three wheels, even supposing it could run by itself; I am afraid there is work here for a wheelwright, in which case I cannot assist you; if you were in need of a blacksmith it would be otherwise." "I don't think either the wheel or the axle is hurt," said the postillion, who had been handling both; "it is only the linch-pin having dropped out that caused the wheel to fly off; if I could but find the linch-pin!—though, perhaps, it fell out a mile away." "Very likely," said I; "but never mind the linch-pin, I can make you one, or something that will serve: but I can't stay here any longer, I am going to my place below with this young gentlewoman, and you had better follow us." "I am ready," said the man; and after

lifting up the wheel and propping it against the chaise, he went with us, slightly limping, and with his hand pressed to his thigh.

As we were descending the narrow path, Belle leading the way, and myself the last of the party, the postillion suddenly stopped short, and looked about him. "Why do you stop?" said I. "I don't wish to offend you," said the man, "but this seems to be a strange place you are leading me into; I hope you and the young gentlewoman, as you call her, don't mean me any harm—you seemed in a great hurry to bring me here." "We wished to get you out of the rain," said I, "and ourselves too; that is, if we can, which I rather doubt, for the canvas of a tent is slight shelter in such a rain; but what harm should we wish to do you?" "You may think I have money," said the man, "and I have some, but only thirty shillings, and for a sum like that it would be hardly worth while to . . . ." "Would it not?" said I; "thirty shillings, after all, are thirty shillings, and for what I know, half-a-dozen throats may have been cut in this place for that sum at the rate of five shillings each; moreover, there are the horses, which

would serve to establish this young gentlewoman and myself in housekeeping, provided we were thinking of such a thing." "Then I suppose I have fallen into pretty hands," said the man, putting himself in a posture of defence; "but I 'll show no craven heart; and if you attempt to lay hands on me, I 'll try to pay you in your own coin. I 'm rather lamed in the leg, but I can still use my fists; so come on both of you, man and woman, if woman this be, though she looks more like a grenadier."

"Let me hear no more of this nonsense," said Belle; "if you are afraid, you can go back to your chaise—we only seek to do you a kindness."

"Why he was just now talking of cutting throats," said the man. "You brought it on yourself," said Belle; "you suspected us, and he wished to pass a joke upon you; he would not hurt a hair of your head, were your coach laden with gold, nor would I." "Well," said the man, "I was wrong—here 's my hand to both of you," shaking us by the hands; "I 'll go with you where you please, but I thought this a strange lonesome place, though I ought not much to mind strange lone-

some places, having been in plenty of such when I was a servant in Italy, without coming to any harm—come, let us move on, for 'tis a shame to keep you two in the rain."

So we descended the path which led into the depths of the dingle; at the bottom I conducted the postillion to my tent, which, though the rain dripped and trickled through it, afforded some shelter; there I bade him sit down on the log of wood, whilst I placed myself as usual on my stone. Belle in the meantime had repaired to her own place of abode. After a little time, I produced a bottle of the cordial of which I have previously had occasion to speak, and made my guest take a considerable draught. I then offered him some bread and cheese, which he accepted with thanks. In about an hour the rain had much abated: "What do you now propose to do?" said I. "I scarcely know," said the man; "I suppose I must endeavour to put on the wheel with your help." "How far are you from your home?" I demanded. "Upwards of thirty miles," said the man; "my master keeps an inn on the great north road, and from thence I started early this morning with a

family, which I conveyed across the country to a hall at some distance from here. On my return I was beset by the thunder storm, which frightened the horses, who dragged the chaise off the road to the field above, and overset it as you saw. I had proposed to pass the night at an inn about twelve miles from here on my way back, though how I am to get there to-night I scarcely know, even if we can put on the wheel, for, to tell you the truth, I am shaken by my fall, and the smoulder and smoke of that fire-ball have rather bewildered my head; I am, moreover, not much acquainted with the way."

"The best thing you can do," said I, "is to pass the night here; I will presently light a fire, and endeavour to make you comfortable—in the morning we will see to your wheel." "Well," said the man, "I shall be glad to pass the night here, provided I do not intrude, but I must see to the horses." Thereupon I conducted the man to the place where the horses were tied. "The trees drip very much upon them," said the man, "and it will not do for them to remain here all night; they will be better out on the field picking the grass; but first

of all they must have a good feed of corn." Thereupon he went to his chaise, from which he presently brought two small bags, partly filled with corn—into them he inserted the mouths of the horses, tying them over their heads. "Here we will leave them for a time," said the man; "when I think they have had enough, I will come back, tie their fore-legs, and let them pick about."

CHAPTER XXX.

FIRE OF CHARCOAL.—THE NEW COMER.—NO WONDER!—NOT A BLACKSMITH.—A LOVE AFFAIR.—GRETNA GREEN.—A COOL THOUSAND.—FAMILY ESTATES.—BOROUGH INTEREST.—GRAND EDUCATION.—LET US HEAR.—ALREADY QUARRELLING.—HONOURABLE PARENTS.—MOST HEROICALLY.—NOT COMMON PEOPLE.—FRESH CHARCOAL.

It might be about ten o'clock at night. Belle, the postillion, and myself, sat just within the tent, by a fire of charcoal which I had kindled in the chafing-pan. The man had removed the harness from his horses, and, after tethering their legs, had left them for the night in the field above to regale themselves on what grass they could find. The rain had long since entirely ceased, and the moon and stars shone bright in the firmament, up to which, putting aside the canvas, I occasionally looked from the depths of the dingle. Large drops of water, however, falling now and then upon the tent from the neighbouring trees, would have served, could we have forgotten it, to remind us of the recent storm, and

also a certain chilliness in the atmosphere, unusual to the season, proceeding from the moisture with which the ground was saturated; yet these circumstances only served to make our party enjoy the charcoal fire the more. There we sat bending over it: Belle, with her long beautiful hair streaming over her magnificent shoulders; the postillion smoking his pipe, in his shirt-sleeves and waistcoat, having flung aside his great coat, which had sustained a thorough wetting; and I without my wagoner's slop, of which, it being in the same plight, I had also divested myself.

The new comer was a well-made fellow of about thirty, with an open and agreeable countenance. I found him very well informed for a man in his station, and with some pretensions to humour. After we had discoursed for some time on indifferent subjects, the postillion, who had exhausted his pipe, took it from his mouth, and, knocking out the ashes upon the ground, exclaimed, "I little thought, when I got up in the morning, that I should spend the night in such agreeable company, and after such a fright."

"Well," said I, "I am glad that your opinion of

us has improved; it is not long since you seemed to hold us in rather a suspicious light."

"And no wonder," said the man, "seeing the place you were taking me to! I was not a little, but very much afraid of ye both; and so I continued for some time, though, not to show a craven heart, I pretended to be quite satisfied; but I see I was altogether mistaken about ye. I thought you vagrant Gypsy folks and trampers; but now . . ."

"Vagrant Gypsy folks and trampers," said I; "and what are we but people of that stamp?"

"Oh," said the postillion, "if you wish to be thought such, I am far too civil a person to contradict you, especially after your kindness to me, but . . . ."

"But!" said I; "what do you mean by but? I would have you to know that I am proud of being a travelling blacksmith; look at these donkey-shoes, I finished them this day."

The postillion took the shoes and examined them. "So you made these shoes?" he cried at last.

"To be sure I did; do you doubt it?"

"Not in the least," said the man.

"Ah! ah!" said I, "I thought I should bring

you back to your original opinion. I am, then, a vagrant Gypsy body, a tramper, a wandering blacksmith."

"Not a blacksmith, whatever else you may be," said the postillion, laughing.

"Then how do you account for my making those shoes?"

"By your not being a blacksmith," said the postillion; "no blacksmith would have made shoes in that manner. Besides, what did you mean just now by saying you had finished these shoes to-day? A real blacksmith would have flung off three or four sets of donkey-shoes in one morning, but you, I will be sworn, have been hammering at these for days, and they do you credit—but why?—because you are no blacksmith; no, friend, your shoes may do for this young gentlewoman's animal, but I shouldn't like to have my horses shod by you, unless at a great pinch indeed."

"Then," said I, "for what do you take me?"

"Why, for some runaway young gentleman," said the postillion. "No offence, I hope?"

"None at all; no one is offended at being taken or mistaken for a young gentleman, whether run-

away or not; but from whence do you suppose I have run away?"

"Why, from college," said the man: "no offence?"

"None whatever; and what induced me to run away from college?"

"A love affair, I 'll be sworn," said the postillion. "You had become acquainted with this young gentlewoman, so she and you . . . ."

"Mind how you get on, friend," said Belle, in a deep serious tone.

"Pray proceed," said I; "I dare say you mean no offence."

"None in the world," said the postillion; "all I was going to say was, that you agreed to run away together, you from college, and she from boarding-school. Well, there 's nothing to be ashamed of in a matter like that, such things are done every day by young folks in high life."

"Are you offended?" said I to Belle,

Belle made no answer; but, placing her elbows on her knees, buried her face in her hands.

"So we ran away together?" said I.

"Ay, ay," said the postillion, "to Gretna Green,

though I can't say that I drove ye, though I have driven many a pair."

"And from Gretna Green we came here?"

"I'll be bound you did," said the man, "till you could arrange matters at home."

"And the horse-shoes?" said I.

"The donkey-shoes you mean," answered the postillion; "why, I suppose you persuaded the blacksmith who married you to give you, before you left, a few lessons in his trade."

"And we intend to stay here till we have arranged matters at home?"

"Ay, ay," said the postillion, "till the old people are pacified, and they send you letters directed to the next post town, to be left till called for, beginning with 'Dear children,' and enclosing you each a cheque for one hundred pounds, when you will leave this place, and go home in a coach like gentlefolks, to visit your governors; I should like nothing better than to have the driving of you: and then there will be a grand meeting of the two families, and after a few reproaches, the old people will agree to do something handsome for the poor thoughtless things; so you will have a genteel house taken for

you, and an annuity allowed you. You won't get much the first year, five hundred at the most, in order that the old folks may let you feel that they are not altogether satisfied with you, and that you are yet entirely in their power; but the second, if you don't get a cool thousand, may I catch cold, especially should young madam here present a son and heir for the old people to fondle, destined one day to become sole heir of the two illustrious houses; and then all the grand folks in the neighbourhood, who have—bless their prudent hearts!—kept rather aloof from you till then, for fear you should want anything from them—I say all the carriage people in the neighbourhood, when they see how swimmingly matters are going on, will come in shoals to visit you."

"Really," said I, "you are getting on swimmingly."

"Oh," said the postillion, "I was not a gentleman's servant nine years without learning the ways of gentry, and being able to know gentry when I see them."

"And what do you say to all this?" I demanded of Belle.

"Stop a moment," interposed the postillion, "I have one more word to say:—and when you are surrounded by your comforts, keeping your nice little barouche and pair, your coachman and livery servant, and visited by all the carriage people in the neighbourhood—to say nothing of the time when you come to the family estates on the death of the old people—I shouldn't wonder if now and then you look back with longing and regret to the days when you lived in the damp dripping dingle, had no better equipage than a pony or donkey-cart, and saw no better company than a tramper or Gypsy, except once, when a poor postillion was glad to seat himself at your charcoal fire."

"Pray," said I, "did you ever take lessons in elocution?"

"Not directly," said the postillion; "but my old master, who was in Parliament, did, and so did his son, who was intended to be an orator. A great professor used to come and give them lessons, and I used to stand and listen, by which means I picked up a considerable quantity of what is called rhetoric. In what I last said, I was aiming at what I have heard him frequently endeavouring to teach

my governors as a thing indispensably necessary in all oratory, a graceful pere — pere — peregrination."

"Peroration, perhaps?"

"Just so," said the postillion; "and now I 'm sure I am not mistaken about you; you have taken lessons yourself, at first hand, in the college vacations, and a promising pupil you were, I make no doubt. Well, your friends will be all the happier to get you back. Has your governor much borough interest?"

"I ask you once more," said I, addressing myself to Belle, "what you think of the history which this good man has made for us?"

"What should I think of it," said Belle, still keeping her face buried in her hands, "but that it is mere nonsense?"

"Nonsense!" said the postillion.

"Yes," said the girl, "and you know it."

"May my leg always ache, if I do," said the postillion, patting his leg with his hand; "will you persuade me that this young man has never been at college?"

"I have never been at college, but . . . ."

"Ay, ay," said the postillion, "but . . . . "

"I have been to the best schools in Britain, to say nothing of a celebrated one in Ireland."

"Well, then, it comes to the same thing," said the postillion, "or perhaps you know more than if you had been at college—and your governor . . . .

"My governor, as you call him," said I, "is dead."

"And his borough interest?"

"My father had no borough interest," said I; "had he possessed any, he would perhaps not have died, as he did, honourably poor."

"No, no," said the postillion, "if he had had borough interest, he wouldn't have been poor, nor honourable, though perhaps a right honourable. However, with your grand education and genteel manners, you made all right at last by persuading this noble young gentlewoman to run away from boarding-school with you."

"I was never at boarding-school," said Belle, "unless you call . . . . "

"Ay, ay," said the postillion, "boarding-school is vulgar, I know: I beg your pardon, I ought to have called it academy, or by some other much

finer name—you were in something much greater than a boarding-school."

"There you are right," said Belle, lifting up her head and looking the postillion full in the face by the light of the charcoal fire, "for I was bred in the workhouse."

"Wooh!" said the postillion.

"It is true that I am of good . . . . "

"Ay, ay," said the postillion, "let us hear . . . "

"Of good blood," continued Belle; "my name is Berners, Isopel Berners, though my parents were unfortunate. Indeed, with respect to blood, I believe I am of better blood than the young man."

"There you are mistaken," said I; "by my father's side I am of Cornish blood, and by my mother's of brave French Protestant extraction. Now, with respect to the blood of my father—and to be descended well on the father's side is the principal thing—it is the best blood in the world, for the Cornish blood, as the proverb says . . . . "

"I don't care what the proverb says," said Belle; "I say my blood is the best—my name is Berners, Isopel Berners—it was my mother's name, and is

better, I am sure, than any you bear, whatever that may be; and though you say that the descent on the father's side is the principal thing—and I know why you say so," she added with some excitement—"I say that descent on the mother's side is of most account, because the mother . . . . "

"Just come from Gretna Green, and already quarrelling!" said the postillion.

"We do not come from Gretna Green," said Belle.

"Ah, I had forgot," said the postillion, "none but great people go to Gretna Green. Well, then, from church, and already quarrelling about family, just like two great people."

"We have never been to church," said Belle, "and to prevent any more guessing on your part, it will be as well for me to tell you, friend, that I am nothing to the young man, and he, of course, nothing to me. I am a poor travelling girl, born in a workhouse: journeying on my occasions with certain companions, I came to this hollow, where my company quarrelled with the young man, who had settled down here, as he had a right to do if he pleased; and not being able to drive him out, they

went away after quarrelling with me, too, for not choosing to side with them; so I stayed here along with the young man, there being room for us both, and the place being as free to me as to him."

"And in order that you may be no longer puzzled with respect to myself," said I, "I will give you a brief outline of my history. I am the son of honourable parents, who gave me a first-rate education, as far as literature and languages went, with which education I endeavoured, on the death of my father, to advance myself to wealth and reputation in the big city; but failing in the attempt, I conceived a disgust for the busy world, and determined to retire from it. After wandering about for some time, and meeting with various adventures, in one of which I contrived to obtain a pony, cart, and certain tools, used by smiths and tinkers, I came to this place, where I amused myself with making horse-shoes, or rather pony-shoes, having acquired the art of wielding the hammer and tongs from a strange kind of smith—not him of Gretna Green—whom I knew in my childhood. And here I lived, doing harm to no one, quite lonely and solitary, till one fine monring the premises

were visited by this young gentlewoman and her companions. She did herself anything but justice when she said that her companions quarrelled with her because she would not side with them against me; they quarrelled with her because she came most heroically to my assistance as I was on the point of being murdered; and she forgot to tell you that, after they had abandoned her, she stood by me in the dark hour, comforting and cheering me, when unspeakable dread, to which I am occasionally subject, took possession of my mind. She says she is nothing to me, even as I am nothing to her. I am of course nothing to her, but she is mistaken in thinking she is nothing to me. I entertain the highest regard and admiration for her, being convinced that I might search the whole world in vain for a nature more heroic and devoted."

"And for my part," said Belle, with a sob, "a more quiet agreeable partner in a place like this I would not wish to have; it is true he has strange ways, and frequently puts words into my mouth very difficult to utter, but—but . . . ." and here she buried her face once more in her hands.

"Well," said the postillion, "I have been mistaken about you; that is, not altogether, but in part. You are not rich folks, it seems, but you are not common people, and that I could have sworn. What I call a shame is, that some people I have known are not in your place and you in theirs, you with their estates and borough interest, they in this dingle with these carts and animals; but there is no help for these things. Were I the great Mumbo Jumbo above, I would endeavour to manage matters better; but being a simple postillion, glad to earn three shillings a day, I can't be expected to do much."

"Who is Mumbo Jumbo?" said I.

"Ah!" said the postillion, "I see there may be a thing or two I know better than yourself. Mumbo Jumbo is a god of the black coast, to which people go for ivory and gold."

"Were you ever there?" I demanded.

"No," said the postillion, "but I heard plenty of Mumbo Jumbo when I was a boy."

"I wish you would tell us something about yourself. I believe that your own real history

would prove quite as entertaining, if not more, than that which you imagined about us."

"I am rather tired," said the postillion, "and my leg is rather troublesome. I should be glad to try to sleep upon one of your blankets. However, as you wish to hear something about me, I shall be happy to oblige you; but your fire is rather low, and this place is chilly."

Thereupon I arose, and put fresh charcoal on the pan; then taking it outside the tent, with a kind of fan which I had fashioned, I fanned the coals into a red glow, and continued doing so until the greater part of the noxious gas, which the coals are in the habit of exhaling, was exhausted. I then brought it into the tent and reseated myself, scattering over the coals a small portion of sugar. "No bad smell," said the postillion; "but upon the whole I think I like the smell of tobacco better; and with your permission I will once more light my pipe."

Thereupon he relighted his pipe; and, after taking two or three whiffs, began in the following manner.

CHAPTER XXXI.

AN EXORDIUM.—FINE SHIPS.—HIGH BARBARY CAPTAINS.—FREE-BORN ENGLISHMEN.—MONSTROUS FIGURE.—SWASH-BUCKLER.—THE GRAND COACHES.—THE FOOTMEN.—A TRAVELLING EXPEDITION.—BLACK JACK.—NELSON'S CANNON.—PHARAOH'S BUTLER.—A DILIGENCE.—TWO PASSENGERS.—SHARKING PRIEST.—VIRGILIO.—LESSONS IN ITALIAN.—TWO OPINIONS.—HOLY MARY.—PRIESTLY CONFEDERATES.—METHODIST CHAPEL.—VETURINI.—SOME OF OUR PARTY.—LIKE A SEPULCHRE.—ALL FOR THEMSELVES.

"I AM a poor postillion, as you see; yet, as I have seen a thing or two, and heard a thing or two of what is going on in the world, perhaps what I have to tell you connected with myself may not prove altogether uninteresting. Now, my friends, this manner of opening a story is what the man who taught rhetoric would call a hex—hex . . . ."

"Exordium," said I.

"Just so," said the postillion; "I treated you to a per—per—peroration some time ago, so that I have contrived to put the cart before the horse, as the Irish orators frequently do in the honourable House, in whose speeches, especially those who have taken lessons in rhetoric, the per—per—what's the word?—frequently goes before the exordium.

"I was born in the neighbouring county; my father was land-steward to a squire of about a thousand a year. My father had two sons, of whom I am the youngest by some years. My elder brother was of a spirited roving disposition, and for fear that he should turn out what is generally termed ungain, my father determined to send him to sea: so once upon a time, when my brother was about fifteen, he took him to the great sea-port of the county, where he apprenticed him to a captain of one of the ships which trade to the high Barbary coast. Fine ships they were, I have heard say, more than thirty in number, and all belonging to a wonderful great gentleman, who had once been a parish boy, but had contrived to make an immense fortune by trading to that coast for gold-dust, ivory, and other strange articles; and for doing so, I mean for making a fortune, had been made a knight baronet. So my brother went to the high Barbary shore, on board the fine vessel, and in about a year returned and came to visit us; he repeated the voyage several times, always coming to see his parents on his return. Strange stories he used to tell us of what he had been witness to on the high Barbary coast,

both off shore and on. He said that the fine vessel in which he sailed was nothing better than a painted hell; that the captain was a veritable fiend, whose grand delight was in tormenting his men, especially when they were sick, as they frequently were, there being always fever on the high Barbary coast; and that though the captain was occasionally sick himself, his being so made no difference, or rather it did make a difference, though for the worse, he being when sick always more inveterate and malignant than at other times. He said that once, when he himself was sick, his captain had pitched his face all over, which exploit was much applauded by the other high Barbary captains—all of whom, from what my brother said, appeared to be of much the same disposition as my brother's captain, taking wonderful delight in tormenting the crews, and doing all manner of terrible things. My brother frequently said that nothing whatever prevented him from running away from his ship, and never returning, but the hope he entertained of one day being captain himself, and able to torment people in his turn, which he solemnly vowed he would do, as a kind of compensation for what he himself had undergone.

And if things were going on in a strange way off the high Barbary shore amongst those who came there to trade, they were going on in a way yet stranger with the people who lived upon it.

"Oh the strange ways of the black men who lived on that shore, of which my brother used to tell us at home—selling their sons, daughters, and servants for slaves, and the prisoners taken in battle, to the Spanish captains, to be carried to Havannah, and when there, sold at a profit, the idea of which, my brother said, went to the hearts of our own captains, who used to say what a hard thing it was that free-born Englismen could not have a hand in the traffic, seeing that it was forbidden by the laws of their country; talking fondly of the good old times when their forefathers used to carry slaves to Jamaica and Barbadoes, realizing immense profit, besides the pleasure of hearing their shrieks on the voyage; and then the superstitions of the blacks, which my brother used to talk of; their sharks' teeth, their wisps of fowls' feathers, their half-baked pots full of burnt bones, of which they used to make what they called fetish, and bow down to, and ask favours of, and then, perhaps, abuse and

strike, provided the senseless rubbish did not give them what they asked for; and then, above all, Mumbo Jumbo, the grand fetish master, who lived somewhere in the woods, and who used to come out every now and then with his fetish companions; a monstrous figure, all wound round with leaves and branches, so as to be quite indistinguishable, and, seating himself on the high seat in the villages, receive homage from the people, and also gifts and offerings, the most valuable of which were pretty damsels, and then betake himself back again, with his followers, into the woods. Oh the tales that my brother used to tell us of the high Barbary shore! Poor fellow! what became of him I can't say; the last time he came back from a voyage, he told us that his captain, as soon as he had brought his vessel to port and settled with his owner, drowned himself off the quay, in a fit of the horrors, which it seems high Barbary captains, after a certain number of years, are much subject to. After staying about a month with us, he went to sea again, with another captain; and, bad as the old one had been, it appears the new one was worse, for, unable to bear his treatment, my brother

left his ship off the high Barbary shore, and ran away up the country. Some of his comrades, whom we afterwards saw, said that there were various reports about him on the shore; one that he had taken on with Mumbo Jumbo, and was serving him in his house in the woods, in the capacity of swash-buckler, or life-guardsman; another, that he was gone in quest of a mighty city in the heart of the negro country; another, that in swimming a stream he had been devoured by an alligator. Now, these two last reports were bad enough; the idea of their flesh and blood being bit asunder by a ravenous fish, was sad enough to my poor parents; and not very comfortable was the thought of his sweltering over the hot sands in quest of the negro city; but the idea of their son, their eldest child, serving Mumbo Jumbo as swash-buckler, was worst of all, and caused my poor parents to shed many a scalding tear.

"I stayed at home with my parents until I was about eighteen, assisting my father in various ways. I then went to live at the Squire's, partly as groom, partly as footman. After living in the country some time, I attended the family in a trip of six

weeks, which they made to London. Whilst there, happening to have some words with an old ill-tempered coachman, who had been for a great many years in the family, my master advised me to leave, offering to recommend me to a family of his acquaintance who were in need of a footman. I was glad to accept his offer, and in a few days went to my new place. My new master was one of the great gentry, a baronet in Parliament, and possessed of an estate of about twenty thousand a year; his family consisted of his lady, a son, a fine young man, just coming of age, and two very sweet amiable daughters. I liked this place much better than my first, there was so much more pleasant noise and bustle—so much more grand company, and so many more opportunities of improving myself. Oh, how I liked to see the grand coaches drive up to the door, with the grand company; and though, amidst that company, there were some who did not look very grand, there were others, and not a few, who did. Some of the ladies quite captivated me; there was the Marchioness of . . . . in particular. This young lady puts me much in mind of her; it is true, the Marchioness,

as I saw her then, was about fifteen years older than this young gentlewoman is now, and not so tall by some inches, but she had the very same hair, and much the same neck and shoulders—no offence, I hope? And then some of the young gentlemen, with their cool, haughty, care-for-nothing looks, struck me as being very fine fellows. There was one in particular, whom I frequently used to stare at, not altogether unlike some one I have seen hereabouts—he had a slight cast in his eye, and . . . . but I won't enter into every particular. And then the footmen! Oh, how those footmen helped to improve me with their conversation. Many of them could converse much more glibly than their masters, and appeared to have much better taste. At any rate, they seldom approved of what their masters did. I remember being once with one in the gallery of the playhouse, when something of Shakspeare's was being performed: some one in the first tier of boxes was applauding very loudly. 'That 's my fool of a governor,' said he; 'he is weak enough to like Shakspeare—I don't;—he 's so confoundedly low, but he won't last long—going down. Shakspeare

culminated — I think that was the word—culminated some time ago.'

"And then the professor of elocution, of whom my governors used to take lessons, and of which lessons I had my share, by listening behind the door; but for that professor of elocution I should not be able to round my periods—an expression of his—in the manner I do.

"After I had been three years at this place, my mistress died. Her death, however, made no great alteration in my way of living, the family spending their winters in London, and their summers at their old seat in S . . . . as before. At last, the young ladies, who had not yet got husbands, which was strange enough, seeing, as I told you before, they were very amiable, proposed to our governor a travelling expedition abroad. The old baronet consented, though young master was much against it, saying they would all be much better at home. As the girls persisted, however, he at last withdrew his opposition, and even promised to follow them as soon as his parliamentary duties would permit; for he was just got into Parliament, and, like most other young members, thought that

nothing could be done in the House without him. So the old gentleman and the two young ladies set off, taking me with them, and a couple of ladies' maids to wait upon them. First of all, we went to Paris, where we continued three months, the old baronet and the ladies going to see the various sights of the city and the neighbourhood, and I attending them. They soon got tired of sight-seeing, and of Paris too; and so did I. However, they still continued there, in order, I believe, that the young ladies might lay in a store of French finery. I should have passed my idle time at Paris, of which I had plenty after the sight-seeing was over, very unpleasantly, but for Black Jack. Eh! did you never hear of Black Jack? Ah! if you had ever been an English servant in Paris, you would have known Black Jack; not an English gentleman's servant who has been at Paris for this last ten years but knows Black Jack and his ordinary. A strange fellow he was—of what country no one could exactly say—for as for judging from speech, that was impossible, Jack speaking all languages equally ill. Some said he came direct from Satan's kitchen, and that when he gives up

keeping ordinary, he will return there again, though the generally-received opinion at Paris was, that he was at one time butler to King Pharaoh; and that, after lying asleep for four thousand years in a place called the Kattycombs, he was awaked by the sound of Nelson's cannon at the battle of the Nile, and going to the shore, took on with the admiral, and became, in course of time, ship steward; and that after Nelson's death he was captured by the French, on board one of whose vessels he served in a somewhat similar capacity till the peace, when he came to Paris, and set up an ordinary for servants, sticking the name of Katcomb over the door, in allusion to the place where he had his long sleep. But, whatever his origin was, Jack kept his own counsel, and appeared to care nothing for what people said about him, or called him. Yes, I forgot, there was one name he would not be called, and that was 'Portuguese.' I once saw Black Jack knock down a coachman, six foot high, who called him black-faced Portuguese. 'Any name but dat, you shab,' said Black Jack, who was a little round fellow, of about five feet two; 'I would not stand to be called Portuguese by Nelson himself.' Jack

was rather fond of talking about Nelson, and hearing people talk about him, so that it is not improbable that he may have sailed with him; and with respect to his having been King Pharaoh's butler, all I have to say is, I am not disposed to give the downright lie to the report. Jack was always ready to do a kind turn to a poor servant out of place, and has often been known to assist such as were in prison, which charitable disposition he perhaps acquired from having lost a good place himself, having seen the inside of a prison, and known the want of a meal's victuals, all which trials King Pharaoh's butler underwent, so he may have been that butler; at any rate, I have known positive conclusions come to on no better premises, if indeed as good. As for the story of his coming direct from Satan's kitchen, I place no confidence in it at all, as Black Jack had nothing of Satan about him but blackness, on which account he was called Black Jack. Nor am I disposed to give credit to a report that his hatred of the Portuguese arose from some ill treatment which he had once experienced when on shore, at Lisbon, from certain gentlewomen of the place, but rather conclude that

it arose from an opinion he entertained that the Portuguese never paid their debts, one of the ambassadors of that nation, whose house he had served, having left Paris several thousand francs in his debt. This is all that I have to say about Black Jack, without whose funny jokes, and good ordinary, I should have passed my time in Paris in a very disconsolate manner.

"After we had been at Paris between two and three months, we left it in the direction of Italy, which country the family had a great desire to see. After travelling a great many days in a thing which, though called a diligence, did not exhibit much diligence, we came to a great big town, seated around a nasty salt-water bason, connected by a narrow passage with the sea. Here we were to embark; and so we did as soon as possible, glad enough to get away—at least I was, and so I make no doubt were the rest, for such a place for bad smells I never was in. It seems all the drains and sewers of the place run into that same salt bason, voiding into it all their impurities, which, not being able to escape into the sea in any considerable quantity, owing to the narrowness of the

entrance, there accumulate, filling the whole atmosphere with these same outrageous scents, on which account the town is a famous lodging-house of the plague. The ship in which we embarked was bound for a place in Italy called Naples, where we were to stay some time. The voyage was rather a lazy one, the ship not being moved by steam; for at the time of which I am speaking, some five years ago, steam-ships were not so plentiful as now. There were only two passengers in the grand cabin, where my governor and his daughters were, an Italian lady and a priest. Of the lady I have not much to say; she appeared to be a quiet respectable person enough, and after our arrival at Naples, I neither saw nor heard anything more of her; but of the priest I shall have a good deal to say in the sequel, (that, by the by, is a word I learnt from the professor of rhetoric,) and it would have been well for our family had they never met him.

"On the third day of the voyage the priest came to me, who was rather unwell with sea-sickness, which he, of course felt nothing of—that kind of people being never affected like others. He was a

finish-looking man of about forty-five, but had something strange in his eyes, which I have since thought denoted that all was not right in a certain place called the heart. After a few words of condolence, in a broken kind of English, he asked me various questions about our family; and I, won by his seeming kindness, told him all I knew about them—of which communicativeness I afterwards very much repented. As soon as he had got out of me all he desired, he left me; and I observed that during the rest of the voyage he was wonderfully attentive to our governor, and yet more to the young ladies. Both, however, kept him rather at a distance; the young ladies were reserved, and once or twice I heard our governor cursing him between his teeth for a sharking priest. The priest, however, was not disconcerted, and continued his attentions, which in a little time produced an effect, so that, by the time we landed at Naples, our great folks had conceived a kind of liking for the man, and when they took their leave invited him to visit them, which he promised to do. We hired a grand house or palace at Naples; it belonged to a poor kind of prince, who was glad enough to let it to

our governor, and also his servants and carriages; and glad enough were the poor servants, for they got from us what they never got from the prince—plenty of meat and money; and glad enough, I make no doubt, were the horses for the provender we gave them; and I dare say the coaches were not sorry to be cleaned and furbished up. Well, we went out and came in; going to see the sights, and returning. Amongst other things we saw was the burning mountain, and the tomb of a certain sorcerer called Virgilio, who made witch rhymes, by which he could raise the dead. Plenty of people came to see us, both English and Italians, and amongst the rest the priest. He did not come amongst the first, but allowed us to settle and become a little quiet before he showed himself; and after a day or two he paid us another visit, then another, till at last his visits were daily.

"I did not like that Jack Priest; so I kept my eye upon all his motions. Lord! how that Jack Priest did curry favour with our governor and the two young ladies; and he curried, and curried, till he had got himself into favour with the governor, and more especially with the two young ladies, of whom

their father was doatingly fond. At last the ladies took lessons in Italian of the priest, a language in which he was said to be a grand proficient, and of which they had hitherto known but very little; and from that time his influence over them, and consequently over the old governor, increased, till the tables were turned, and he no longer curried favour with them, but they with him—yes, as true as my leg aches, the young ladies curried, and the old governor curried favour with that same Priest; when he was with them, they seemed almost to hang on his lips, that is, the young ladies; and as for the old governor, he never contradicted him, and when the fellow was absent, which, by the by, was not often, it was, 'Father so-and-so said this, and Father so-and-so said that; Father so-and-so thinks we should do so-and-so, or that we should not do so-and-so.' I at first thought that he must have given them something, some philtre or the like; but one of the English maid-servants, who had a kind of respect for me, and who saw much more behind the scenes than I did, informed me that he was continually instilling strange notions into their heads, striving, by every possible method, to make

them despise the religion of their own land, and take up that of the foreign country in which they were. And sure enough, in a little time, the girls had altogether left off going to an English chapel, and were continually visiting places of Italian worship. The old governor, it is true, still went to his church, but he appeared to be hesitating between two opinions; and once, when he was at dinner, he said to two or three English friends, that since he had become better acquainted with it, he had conceived a much more favourable opinion of the Catholic religion than he had previously entertained. In a word, the priest ruled the house, and everything was done according to his will and pleasure; by degrees he persuaded the young ladies to drop their English acquaintances, whose place he supplied with Italians, chiefly females. My poor old governor would not have had a person to speak to—for he never could learn the language—but for two or three Englishmen who used to come occasionally and take a bottle with him in a summer-house, whose company he could not be persuaded to resign, notwithstanding the entreaties of his daughters, instigated by the priest, whose grand

endeavour seemed to be to render the minds of all three foolish, for his own ends. And if he was busy above stairs with the governor, there was another busy below with us poor English servants, a kind of subordinate priest, a low Italian; as he could speak no language but his own, he was continually jabbering to us in that, and by hearing him the maids and myself contrived to pick up a good deal of the language, so that we understood most that was said, and could speak it very fairly; and the themes of his jabber were the beauty and virtues of one whom he called Holy Mary, and the power and grandeur of one whom he called the Holy Father; and he told us that we should shortly have an opportunity of seeing the Holy Father, who could do anything he liked with Holy Mary: in the mean time we had plenty of opportunities of seeing Holy Mary, for in every church, chapel, and convent to which we were taken, there was an image of Holy Mary, who, if the images were dressed at all in her fashion, must have been very fond of short petticoats and tinsel, and who, if those said figures at all resembled her in face, could scarcely have been half as handsome as either of

my two fellow-servants, not to speak of the young ladies.

"Now it happened that one of the female servants was much taken with what she saw and heard, and gave herself up entirely to the will of the subordinate, who had quite as much dominion over her as his superior had over the ladies; the other maid, however, the one who had a kind of respect for me, was not so easily besotted; she used to laugh at what she saw, and at what the fellow told her, and from her I learnt that amongst other things intended by these priestly confederates was robbery; she said that the poor old governor had already been persuaded by his daughters to put more than a thousand pounds into the superior priest's hands for purposes of charity and religion, as was said, and that the subordinate one had already inveigled her fellow-servant out of every penny which she had saved from her wages, and had endeavoured likewise to obtain what money she herself had, but in vain. With respect to myself, the fellow shortly after made an attempt towards obtaining a hundred crowns, of which, by some means, he knew me to be in possession, telling me what a meritorious thing

it was to give one's superfluities for the purposes of religion. 'That is true,' said I, 'and if, after my return to my native country, I find I have anything which I don't want myself, I will employ it in helping to build a Methodist chapel.'

"By the time that the three months were expired for which we had hired the palace of the needy Prince, the old governor began to talk of returning to England, at least of leaving Italy. I believe he had become frightened at the calls which were continually being made upon him for money; for after all, you know, if there is a sensitive part of a man's wearing apparel, it is his breeches pocket; but the young ladies could not think of leaving dear Italy and the dear priest; and then they had seen nothing of the country, they had only seen Naples; before leaving dear Italia they must see more of the country and the cities; above all, they must see a place which they called the Eternal City, or some similar nonsensical name; and they persisted so that the poor governor permitted them, as usual, to have their way; and it was decided what route they should take—that is, the priest was kind enough to decide for them, and was also kind

enough to promise to go with them part of the route, as far as a place where there was a wonderful figure of Holy Mary, which the priest said it was highly necessary for them to see before visiting the Eternal City: so we left Naples in hired carriages, driven by fellows they call veturini, cheating drunken dogs, I remember they were. Besides our own family there was the priest and his subordinate, and a couple of hired lackeys. We were several days upon the journey, travelling through a very wild country, which the ladies pretended to be delighted with, and which the governor cursed on account of the badness of the roads; and when we came to any particularly wild spot we used to stop, in order to enjoy the scenery, as the ladies said; and then we would spread a horse-cloth on the ground, and eat bread and cheese, and drink wine of the country. And some of the holes and corners in which we bivouacked, as the ladies called it, were something like this place where we are now, so that when I came down here it put me in mind of them. At last we arrived at the place where was the holy image.

"We went to the house or chapel in which the

holy image was kept—a frightful ugly black figure of Holy Mary, dressed in her usual way; and after we had stared at the figure, and some of our party had bowed down to it, we were shown a great many things which were called holy relics, which consisted of thumb-nails, and fore-nails, and toe-nails, and hair and teeth, and a feather or two, and a mighty thigh-bone, but whether of a man or a camel, I can't say; all of which things, I was told, if properly touched and handled, had mighty power to cure all kinds of disorders. And as we went from the holy house, we saw a man in a state of great excitement: he was foaming at the mouth, and cursing the holy image and all its household, because, after he had worshipped it and made offerings to it, and besought it to assist him in a game of chance which he was about to play, it had left him in the lurch, allowing him to lose all his money. And when I thought of all the rubbish I had seen, and the purposes which it was applied to, in conjunction with the rage of the losing gamester at the deaf and dumb image, I could not help comparing the whole with what my poor brother used to tell me of the super-

stitious practices of the blacks on the high Barbary shore, and their occasional rage and fury at the things they worshipped; and I said to myself, if all this here doesn't smell of fetish may I smell fetid.

"At this place the priest left us, returning to Naples with his subordinate, on some particular business, I suppose. It was, however, agreed that he should visit us at the Holy City. We did not go direct to the Holy City, but bent our course to two or three other cities which the family were desirous of seeing; but as nothing occurred to us in these places of any particular interest, I shall take the liberty of passing them by in silence. At length we arrived at the Eternal City: an immense city it was, looking as if it had stood for a long time, and would stand for a long time still; compared with it, London would look like a mere assemblage of bee-skeps; however, give me the bee-skeps with their merry hum and bustle, and life and honey, rather than that huge town, which looked like a sepulchre, where there was no life, no busy hum, no bees, but a scanty sallow population, intermixed with black

priests, white priests, grey priests; and though I don't say there was no honey in the place, for I believe there was, I am ready to take my Bible oath that it was not made there, and that the priests kept it all for themselves."

CHAPTER XXXII.

A CLOISTER.—HALF ENGLISH.—NEW ACQUAINTANCE.—MIXED LIQUORS. —TURNING PAPIST.—PURPOSES OF CHARITY.—FOREIGN RELIGION.— MELANCHOLY.—ELBOWING AND PUSHING.—OUTLANDISH SIGHT.—THE FIGURE.—I DON'T CARE FOR YOU.—MERRY ANDREWS. — ONE GOOD. —RELIGION OF MY COUNTRY.—FELLOW OF SPIRIT.—A DISPUTE.— THE NEXT MORNING.—FEMALE DOLL.—PROPER DIGNITY.—FETISH COUNTRY.

"THE day after our arrival," continued the postillion, "I was sent, under the guidance of a lackey of the place, with a letter, which the priest, when he left, had given us for a friend of his in the Eternal City. We went to a large house, and on ringing were admitted by a porter into a cloister, where I saw some ill-looking, shabby young fellows walking about, who spoke English to one another. To one of these the porter delivered the letter, and the young fellow going away, presently returned and told me to follow him; he led me into a large room, where, behind a table, on which were various papers, and a thing which they call, in that country, a crucifix, sat a man in a kind of priestly dress. The lad having opened the door for me, shut it behind me, and went away. The man behind the table

was so engaged in reading the letter which I had brought, that at first he took no notice of me; he had red hair, a kind of half-English countenance, and was seemingly about five-and-thirty. After a little time he laid the letter down, appeared to consider a moment, and then opened his mouth with a strange laugh, not a loud laugh, for I heard nothing but a kind of hissing deep down the throat; all of a sudden, however, perceiving me, he gave a slight start, but instantly recovering himself, he inquired in English concerning the health of the family, and where we lived: on my delivering him a card, he bade me inform my master and the ladies that in the course of the day he would do himself the honour of waiting upon them. He then arose and opened the door for me to depart. The man was perfectly civil and courteous, but I did not like that strange laugh of his, after having read the letter. He was as good as his word, and that same day paid us a visit. It was now arranged that we should pass the winter in Rome—to my great annoyance, for I wished to return to my native land, being heartily tired of everything connected with Italy. I was not, however, without hope that our young master

would shortly arrive, when I trusted that matters, as far as the family were concerned, would be put on a better footing. In a few days our new acquaintance, who, it seems, was a mongrel Englishman, had procured a house for our accommodation; it was large enough, but not near so pleasant as that we had at Naples, which was light and airy, with a large garden. This was a dark gloomy structure in a narrow street, with a frowning church beside it; it was not far from the place where our new friend lived, and its being so was probably the reason why he selected it. It was furnished partly with articles which we bought, and partly with those which we hired. We lived something in the same way as at Naples; but though I did not much like Naples, I yet liked it better than this place, which was so gloomy. Our new acquaintance made himself as agreeable as he could, conducting the ladies to churches and convents, and frequently passing the afternoon drinking with the governor, who was fond of a glass of brandy and water and a cigar, as the new acquaintance also was — no, I remember, he was fond of gin and water, and did not smoke. I don't think he had so much in-

fluence over the young ladies as the other priest, which was, perhaps, owing to his not being so good looking; but I am sure he had more influence with the governor, owing, doubtless, to his bearing him company in drinking mixed liquors, which the other priest did not do.

"He was a strange fellow, that same new acquaintance of ours, and unlike all the priests I saw in that country, and I saw plenty of various nations:—they were always upon their guard, and had their features and voice modulated; but this man was subject to fits of absence, during which he would frequently mutter to himself, then, though he was perfectly civil to everybody, as far as words went, I observed that he entertained a thorough contempt for most people, especially for those whom he was making dupes. I have observed him whilst drinking with our governor, when the old man's head was turned, look at him with an air which seemed to say, 'What a thundering old fool you are;' and at our young ladies, when their backs were turned, with a glance which said distinctly enough, 'You precious pair of ninnyhammers;' and then his laugh—he had two kinds of laughs—one which

you could hear, and another which you could only see. I have seen him laugh at our governor and the young ladies, when their heads were turned away, but I heard no sound. My mother had a sandy cat, which sometimes used to open its mouth wide with a mew which nobody could hear, and the silent laugh of that red-haired priest used to put me wonderfully in mind of the silent mew of my mother's sandy-red cat. And then the other laugh, which you could hear; what a strange laugh that was, never loud, yes, I have heard it tolerably loud. He once passed near me, after having taken leave of a silly English fellow—a limping parson of the name of Platitude, who, they said, was thinking of turning Papist, and was much in his company; I was standing behind the pillar of a piazza, and as he passed he was laughing heartily. O he was a strange fellow, that same red-haired acquaintance of ours!

"After we had been at Rome about six weeks, our old friend the priest of Naples arrived, but without his subordinate, for whose services he now perhaps thought that he had no occasion. I believe he found matters in our family wearing almost as

favourable an aspect as he could desire: with what he had previously taught them and shown them at Naples and elsewhere, and with what the red-haired confederate had taught them and shown them at Rome, the poor young ladies had become quite handmaids of superstition, so that they, especially the youngest, were prepared to bow down to anything, and kiss anything, however vile and ugly, provided a priest commanded them; and as for the old governor, what with the influence which his daughters exerted, and what with the ascendancy which the red-haired man had obtained over him, he dared not say his purse, far less his soul, was his own. Only think of an Englishman not being master of his own purse! My acquaintance, the lady's maid, assured me that, to her certain knowledge, he had disbursed to the red-haired man, for purposes of charity, as it was said, at least one thousand pounds during the five weeks we had been at Rome. She also told me that things would shortly be brought to a conclusion—and so indeed they were, though in a different manner from what she and I and some other people imagined; that there was to be a grand festival, and a mass, at

which we were to be present, after which the family were to be presented to the Holy Father, for so those two priestly sharks had managed it; and then . . . . . she said she was certain that the two ladies, and perhaps the old governor, would forsake the religion of their native land, taking up with that of these foreign regions, for so my fellow-servant expressed it, and that perhaps attempts might be made to induce us poor English servants to take up with the foreign religion, that is herself and me, for as for our fellow-servant, the other maid, she wanted no inducing, being disposed body and soul to go over to it. Whereupon, I swore with an oath that nothing should induce me to take up with the foreign religion; and the poor maid, my fellow-servant, bursting into tears, said that for her part she would sooner die than have anything to do with it; thereupon we shook hands and agreed to stand by and countenance one another: and moreover, provided our governors were fools enough to go over to the religion of these here foreigners, we would not wait to be asked to do the like, but leave them at once, and make the best of our way home, even if we were forced to beg on the road.

"At last the day of the grand festival came, and we were all to go to the big church to hear the mass. Now it happened that for some time past I had been much afflicted with melancholy, especially when I got up of a morning, produced by the strange manner in which I saw things going on in our family; and to dispel it in some degree, I had been in the habit of taking a dram before breakfast. On the morning in question, feeling particularly low spirited when I thought of the foolish step our governor would probably take before evening, I took two drams before breakfast; and after breakfast, feeling my melancholy still continuing, I took another, which produced a slight effect upon my head, though I am convinced nobody observed it.

"Away we drove to the big church; it was a dark misty day, I remember, and very cold, so that if anybody had noticed my being slightly in liquor, I could have excused myself by saying that I had merely taken a glass to fortify my constitution against the weather; and of one thing I am certain, which is, that such an excuse would have stood me in stead with our governor, who looked, I thought, as if

he had taken one too; but I may be mistaken, and why should I notice him, seeing that he took no notice of me: so away we drove to the big church, to which all the population of the place appeared to be moving.

"On arriving there we dismounted, and the two priests, who were with us, led the family in, whilst I followed at a little distance, but quickly lost them amidst the throng of people. I made my way, however, though in what direction I knew not, except it was one in which everybody seemed striving, and by dint of elbowing and pushing, I at last got to a place which looked like the aisle of a cathedral, where the people stood in two rows, a space between being kept open by certain strangely-dressed men who moved up and down with rods in their hands; all were looking to the upper end of this place or aisle; and at the upper end, separated from the people by palings like those of an altar, sat in magnificent-looking stalls, on the right and the left, various wonderful-looking individuals in scarlet dresses. At the farther end was what appeared to be an altar, on the left hand was a pulpit, and on the right a stall higher than

any of the rest, where was a figure whom I could scarcely see.

"I can't pretend to describe what I saw exactly, for my head, which was at first rather flurried, had become more so from the efforts which I had made to get through the crowd; also from certain singing, which proceeded from I know not where; and, above all, from the bursts of an organ, which were occasionally so loud that I thought the roof, which was painted with wondrous colours, would come toppling down on those below. So there stood I—a poor English servant—in that outlandish place, in the midst of that foreign crowd, lookin at that outlandish sight, hearing those outlandish sounds, and occasionally glancing at our party, which, by this time, I distinguished at the opposite side to where I stood, but much nearer the place where the red figures sat. Yes, there stood our poor governor, and the sweet young ladies, and I thought they never looked so handsome before; and close by them were the sharking priests, and not far from them was that idiotical parson Platitude, winking and grinning, and occasionally lifting up his hands as if in extasy at what he saw

and heard, so that he drew upon himself the notice of the congregation.

"And now an individual mounted the pulpit, and began to preach in a language which I did not understand, but which I believe to be Latin, addressing himself seemingly to the figure in the stall; and when he had ceased, there was more singing, more organ-playing, and then two men in robes brought forth two things which they held up; and then the people bowed their heads, and our poor governor bowed his head, and the sweet young ladies bowed their heads, and the sharking priests, whilst the idiotical parson Platitude tried to fling himself down; and then there were various evolutions withinside the pale, and the scarlet figures got up and sat down; and this kind of thing continued for some time. At length the figure which I had seen in the principal stall came forth and advanced towards the people; an awful figure he was, a huge old man with a sugar-loaf hat, with a sulphur-coloured dress, and holding a crook in his hand like that of a shepherd; and as he advanced the people fell on their knees, our poor old governor amongst them; the sweet young ladies, the

sharking priests, the idiotical parson Platitude, all fell on their knees, and somebody or other tried to pull me on my knees; but by this time I had become outrageous; all that my poor brother used to tell me of the superstitions of the high Barbary shore rushed into my mind, and I thought they were acting them over here; above all, the idea that the sweet young ladies, to say nothing of my poor old governor, were, after the conclusion of all this mummery, going to deliver themselves up body and soul into the power of that horrid-looking old man, maddened me, and, rushing forward into the open space, I confronted the horrible-looking old figure with the sugar-loaf hat, the sulphur-coloured garments, and shepherd's crook, and shaking my fist at his nose, I bellowed out in English—

"'I don't care for you, old Mumbo Jumbo, though you have fetish!'

"I can scarcely tell you what occurred for some time. I have a dim recollection that hands were laid upon me, and that I struck out violently left and right. On coming to myself, I was seated on a stone bench in a large room, something like a

guard-room, in the custody of certain fellows dressed like Merry Andrews; they were bluff, good-looking, wholesome fellows, very different from the sallow Italians; they were looking at me attentively, and occasionally talking to each other in a language which sounded very like the cracking of walnuts in the mouth, very different from cooing Italian. At last one of them asked me in Italian what had ailed me, to which I replied, in an incoherent manner, something about Mumbo Jumbo; whereupon the fellow, one of the bluffest of the lot, a jovial rosy-faced rascal, lifted up his right hand, placing it in such a manner that the lips were between the fore-finger and thumb, then lifting up his right foot and drawing back his head, he sucked in his breath with a hissing sound, as if to imitate one drinking a hearty draught, and then slapped me on the shoulder, saying something which sounded like goot wine, goot companion, whereupon they all laughed, exclaiming, ya, ya, goot companion. And now hurried into the room our poor old governor, with the red-haired priest. The first asked what could have induced me to behave in such a manner in such a place, to which I replied that I was not going to bow down

to Mumbo Jumbo, whatever other people might do. Whereupon my master said he believed I was mad, and the priest said he believed I was drunk; to which I answered that I was neither so mad nor drunk but I could distinguish how the wind lay. Whereupon they left me, and in a little time I was told by the bluff-looking Merry Andrews I was at liberty to depart. I believe the priest, in order to please my governor, interceded for me in high quarters.

"But one good resulted from this affair; there was no presentation of our family to the Holy Father, for old Mumbo was so frightened by my outrageous looks that he was laid up for a week, as I was afterwards informed.

"I went home, and had scarcely been there half an hour when I was sent for by the governor, who again referred to the scene in church, said that he could not tolerate such scandalous behaviour, and that unless I promised to be more circumspect in future, he should be compelled to discharge me. I said that if he was scandalized at my behaviour in the church, I was more scandalized at all I saw going on in the family, which was governed

by two rascally priests, who, not content with plundering him, appeared bent on hurrying the souls of us all to destruction; and that with respect to discharging me, he could do so that moment, as I wished to go. I believe his own reason told him that I was right, for he made no direct answer, but, after looking on the ground for some time, he told me to leave him. As he did not tell me to leave the house, I went to my room, intending to lie down for an hour or two; but scarcely was I there when the door opened, and in came the red-haired priest. He showed himself, as he always did, perfectly civil, asked me how I was, took a chair and sat down. After a hem or two he entered into a long conversation on the excellence of what he called the Catholic religion; told me that he hoped I would not set myself against the light, and likewise against my interest; for that the family were about to embrace the Catholic religion, and would make it worth my while to follow their example. I told him that the family might do what they pleased, but that I would never forsake the religion of my country for any consideration whatever; that I was nothing but a poor servant,

but I was not to be bought by base gold. 'I admire your honourable feelings,' said he, 'you shall have no gold; and as I see you are a fellow of spirit, and do not like being a servant, for which I commend you, I can promise you something better. I have a good deal of influence in this place, and if you will not set your face against the light, but embrace the Catholic religion, I will undertake to make your fortune. You remember those fine fellows to-day who took you into custody, they are the guards of his Holiness. I have no doubt that I have interest enough to procure your enrolment amongst them.' 'What,' said I, 'become swash-buckler to Mumbo Jumbo up here! May I . . . .'—and here I swore—'if I do. The mere possibility of one of their children being swash-buckler to Mumbo Jumbo on the high Barbary shore has always been a source of heart-breaking to my poor parents. What, then, would they not undergo, if they knew for certain that their other child was swash-buckler to Mumbo Jumbo up here?' Thereupon he asked me, even as you did some time ago, what I meant by Mumbo Jumbo? And I told him all I had heard about the Mumbo

Jumbo of the high Barbary shore; telling him that I had no doubt that the old fellow up here was his brother, or nearly related to him. The man with the red hair listened with the greatest attention to all I said, and when I had concluded, he got up, nodded to me, and moved to the door; ere he reached the door I saw his shoulders shaking, and as he closed it behind him I heard him distinctly laughing, to the tune of—he! he! he!

"But now matters began to mend. That same evening my young master unexpectedly arrived. I believe he soon perceived that something extraordinary had been going on in the family. He was for some time closeted with the governor, with whom, I believe, he had a dispute; for my fellow-servant, the ladies' maid, informed me that she heard high words.

"Rather late at night the young gentleman sent for me into his room, and asked me various questions with respect to what had been going on, and my behaviour in the church, of which he had heard something. I told him all I knew with respect to the intrigues of the two priests in the family, and gave him a circumstantial account of all that had

occurred in the church; adding that, under similar circumstances, I was ready to play the same part over again. Instead of blaming me, he commended my behaviour, told me I was a fine fellow, and said he hoped that, if he wanted my assistance, I would stand by him: this I promised to do. Before I left him, he entreated me to inform him the very next time I saw the priests entering the house.

"The next morning, as I was in the court-yard, where I had placed myself to watch, I saw the two enter and make their way up a private stair to the young ladies' apartment; they were attended by a man dressed something like a priest, who bore a large box; I instantly ran to relate what I had seen to my young master. I found him shaving. 'I will just finish what I am about,' said he, 'and then wait upon these gentlemen.' He finished what he was about with great deliberation; then taking a horsewhip, and bidding me follow him, he proceeded at once to the door of his sisters' apartment: finding it fastened, he burst it open at once with his foot and entered, followed by myself. There we beheld the two unfortunate young ladies down on

their knees before a large female doll, dressed up, as usual, in rags and tinsel; the two priests were standing near, one on either side, with their hands uplifted, whilst the fellow who brought the trumpery stood a little way down the private stair, the door of which stood open; without a moment's hesitation, my young master rushed forward, gave the image a cut or two with his horsewhip—then flying at the priests, he gave them a sound flogging, kicked them down the private stair, and spurned the man, box and image after them—then locking the door, he gave his sisters a fine sermon, in which he represented to them their folly in worshipping a silly wooden graven image, which, though it had eyes, could see not; though it had ears, could hear not; though it had hands, could not help itself; and though it had feet, could not move about unless it were carried. Oh, it was a fine sermon that my young master preached, and sorry I am that the Father of the Fetish, old Mumbo, did not hear it. The elder sister looked ashamed, but the youngest, who was very weak, did nothing but wring her hands, weep and bewail the injury which had been done to the dear image. The young man, how-

ever, without paying much regard to either of them, went to his father, with whom he had a long conversation, which terminated in the old governor giving orders for preparations to be made for the family's leaving Rome and returning to England. I believe that the old governor was glad of his son's arrival, and rejoiced at the idea of getting away from Italy, where he had been so plundered and imposed upon. The priests, however, made another attempt upon the poor young ladies. By the connivance of the female servant who was in their interest they found their way once more into their apartment, bringing with them the fetish image, whose body they partly stripped, exhibiting upon it certain sanguine marks which they had daubed upon it with red paint, but which they said were the result of the lashes which it had received from the horsewhip. The youngest girl believed all they said, and kissed and embraced the dear image; but the eldest, whose eyes had been opened by her brother, to whom she was much attached, behaved with proper dignity; for, going to the door, she called the female servant who had a respect for me, and in her presence reproached the two deceivers

for their various impudent cheats, and especially for this their last attempt at imposition; adding, that if they did not forthwith withdraw and rid her sister and herself of their presence, she would send word by her maid to her brother, who would presently take effectual means to expel them. They took the hint and departed, and we saw no more of them.

"At the end of three days we departed from Rome, but the maid whom the Priests had cajoled remained behind, and it is probable that the youngest of our ladies would have done the same thing if she could have had her own will, for she was continually raving about her image, and saying she should wish to live with it in a convent; but we watched the poor thing, and got her on board ship. Oh, glad was I to leave that fetish country and old Mumbo behind me!"

CHAPTER XXXIII.

NOTHING BUT GLOOM.—SPORTING CHARACTER.—GOUTY TORY.—SERVANTS' CLUB. — POLITICS. — REFORMADO FOOTMAN.—PERORATION.—GOOD NIGHT.

"We arrived in England, and went to our country seat, but the peace and tranquillity of the family had been marred, and I no longer found my place the pleasant one which it had formerly been; there was nothing but gloom in the house, for the youngest daughter exhibited signs of lunacy, and was obliged to be kept under confinement. The next season I attended my master, his son, and eldest daughter to London, as I had previously done. There I left them, for hearing that a young baronet, an acquaintance of the family, wanted a servant, I applied for the place, with the consent of my masters, both of whom gave me a strong recommendation; and, being approved of, I went to live with him.

"My new master was what is called a sporting character, very fond of the turf, upon which he was not very fortunate. He was frequently very much in want of money, and my wages were anything but regularly paid; nevertheless, I liked him very much, for he treated me more like a friend than a domestic, continually consulting me as to his affairs. At length he was brought nearly to his last shifts, by backing the favourite at the Derby, which favourite turned out a regular brute, being found nowhere at the rush. Whereupon, he and I had a solemn consultation over fourteen glasses of brandy and water, and as many cigars—I mean, between us—as to what was to be done. He wished to start a coach, in which event he was to be driver, and I guard. He was quite competent to drive a coach, being a first-rate whip, and I dare say I should have made a first-rate guard; but, to start a coach requires money, and we neither of us believed that anybody would trust us with vehicles and horses, so that idea was laid aside. We then debated as to whether or not he should go into the Church; but to go into the Church—at any rate to become a dean or bishop, which would have been

our aim—it is necessary for a man to possess some education; and my master, although he had been at the best school in England, that is, the most expensive, and also at College, was almost totally illiterate, so we let the Church scheme follow that of the coach. At last, bethinking me that he was tolerably glib at the tongue, as most people are who are addicted to the turf, also a great master of slang; remembering also that he had a crabbed old uncle, who had some borough interest, I proposed that he should get into the House, promising in one fortnight to qualify him to make a figure in it, by certain lessons which I would give him. He consented; and during the next fortnight I did little else than give him lessons in elocution, following to a tittle the method of the great professor, which I had picked up, listening behind the door. At the end of that period, we paid a visit to his relation, an old gouty Tory, who, at first, received us very coolly. My master, however, by flattering a predilection of his for Billy Pitt, soon won his affections so much, that he promised to bring him into Parliament; and in less than a month was as good as his word. My

master, partly by his own qualifications, and partly by the assistance which he had derived, and still occasionally derived from me, cut a wonderful figure in the House, and was speedily considered one of the most promising speakers; he was always a good hand at promising—he is at present, I believe, a Cabinet minister.

"But as he got up in the world he began to look down on me. I believe he was ashamed of the obligation under which he lay to me; and at last, requiring no farther hints as to oratory from a poor servant like me, he took an opportunity of quarrelling with me and discharging me. However, as he had still some grace, he recommended me to a gentleman with whom, since he had attached himself to politics, he had formed an acquaintance, the editor of a grand Tory Review. I lost caste terribly amongst the servants for entering the service of a person connected with a profession so mean as literature; and it was proposed at the Servants' Club, in Park Lane, to eject me from that society. The proposition, however, was not carried into effect, and I was permitted to show myself among them, though few condescended to take much

notice of me. My master was one of the best men in the world, but also one of the most sensitive. On his veracity being impugned by the editor of a newspaper, he called him out, and shot him through the arm. Though servants are seldom admirers of their masters, I was a great admirer of mine, and eager to follow his example. The day after the encounter, on my veracity being impugned by the servant of Lord C . . . . in something I said in praise of my master, I determined to call him out; so I went into another room and wrote a challenge. But whom should I send it by? Several servants to whom I applied refused to be the bearers of it; they said I had lost caste, and they could not think of going out with me. At length the servant of the Duke of B . . . consented to take it; but he made me to understand that, though he went out with me, he did so merely because he despised the Whiggish principles of Lord C . . . .'s servant, and that if I thought he intended to associate with me I should be mistaken. Politics, I must tell you, at that time ran as high amongst the servants as the gentlemen, the servants, however, being almost invariably opposed to the politics

of their respective masters, though both parties agreed in one point, the scouting of everything low and literary, though I think, of the two, the liberal or reform party were the most inveterate. So he took my challenge, which was accepted; we went out, Lord C . . . .'s servant being seconded by a reformado footman from the palace. We fired three times without effect; but this affair lost me my place; my master on hearing it forthwith discharged me; he was, as I have said before, very sensitive, and he said this duel of mine was a parody of his own. Being, however, one of the best men in the world, on his discharging me he made me a donation of twenty pounds.

"And it was well that he made me this present, for without it I should have been penniless, having contracted rather expensive habits during the time that I lived with the young baronet. I now determined to visit my parents, whom I had not seen for years. I found them in good health, and, after staying with them for two months, I returned again in the direction of town, walking, in order to see the country. On the second day of my journey, not being used to such fatigue, I fell ill at a great inn

on the north road, and there I continued for some weeks till I recovered, but by that time my money was entirely spent. By living at the inn I had contracted an acquaintance with the master and the people, and become accustomed to inn life. As I thought that I might find some difficulty in procuring any desirable situation in London, owing to my late connection with literature, I determined to remain where I was, provided my services would be accepted. I offered them to the master, who, finding I knew something of horses, engaged me as a postillion. I have remained there since. You have now heard my story.

"Stay, you sha'n't say that I told my tale without a per—peroration. What shall it be? Oh, I remember something which will serve for one. As I was driving my chaise some weeks ago, I saw standing at the gate of an avenue, which led up to an old mansion, a figure which I thought I recognised. I looked at it attentively, and the figure, as I passed, looked at me; whether it remembered me I do not know, but I recognised the face it showed me full well.

"If it was not the identical face of the red-haired priest whom I had seen at Rome, may I catch cold!

"Young gentleman, I will now take a spell on your blanket—young lady, good night."

THE END.

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